Halo: Ancient Elements

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Summary: A deep ancient enemy is discovered below our very feet and a star-lord arrives! Can Avatar Korra stop this Ancient Evil and befriend the Star-Lord? Rated T for Violence, rating might be a subject to change. SEQUEL RELEASED.

1. Discovery of the Past

Halo: Ancient Elements

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><p>Many years agoâ€¦long before the first human stood on this world, the ancients ruled the cosmos. They created great monuments of their power and will, made worlds habitable for their divine people. Then the great Flood came upon them and all life.<p>

Seeing themselves as protectors of all, the Ancients created the Rings. According to the legend, before they fired the Rings, a goddess by the name of The Librarian saved many races from extinction. But a handful of humans were brought to a special worldâ€¦a Shield World.

She would place them there and with the aid of her mighty Sentinels, the humans would be placed into a long sleep. The Rings firedâ€¦and all life that was not saved endedâ€¦as planned.

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><p>"You got a lighter?" A man asked.<p>

"Who needs a lighter when you can firebend?" The other man responded as he lighted a small fire from his thumb. The dark tunnel was then lighted by the small fire.

"Good, now we can see where we are going. " The other explorer said. They continued down the dark tunnel until they came to sudden halt. "What's that?" He asked.

"Looks like a doorâ€¦made out of metal." The firebending explorer responded. "You can metalbend, open it."

His friend tried to bend it open, but nothing happened.

"Must be platinum or cast iron." He said as he tapped the metallic door. "Doesn't feel like any metal I know of."

Then as he passed his hand down the gate a bright blue light appeared in front of them. They were startled by the light and the thing that came out from it. "What is that?!" The firebending explorer asked.

"I don't know but it looks like typewriter." The earthbending explorer responded as he touched the light construct. "It feels physical." But as soon as he touched it, the gate began to move.

"Gah! Why did you do!?" The firebending explorer yelled.

"I didn't do anything, it's just moving by itself!" The earthbender responded, equally surprised and scared by the sudden movement of the rather alien gate. One it opened, a strange metal corridor was seen inside. With a stair case going downâ€¦deeper into the earth and ground.

"What do we do?" The earthbender asked.

"I have never seen anything like this in my lifeâ€¦" The firebender responded as he went down the stairs. "It's darkâ€¦" He said as he kept going down.

"Comeback!" The earhtbender yelled at his companion.

"Wait." The firebender said as he found another gate, but this time there was some kind of button in the middle of it. "This could be the greatest find in the history of humanity."

He pressed the button and the gates openedâ€¦

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><p>Red lights flashed. They flashed across the interior of a derelict human vessel floating in space. Inside the cryo chamber, a blue ball of light floated above a holotank. The ball of light then took the form of a woman, she looked afraid at what she could see from the ship's still working outer cameras.<p>

The remains of the ship known as Forward Unto Dawn was closing in to a nearby planet. Not only was it heading rapidly, but several Covenant cruisers were floating above the planet as well. She began to look for the activation key. She found it and activated it!

"Wake up, Chief. Wake upâ€¦" She said in a low tone as the only working cryo tube hushed open.

2. Hard Landing

**UNSC Forward Unto Dawn**

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><p>The tall green-armored man jolted up inside his cryo pod, his vision began to clear. The armored man began to look for a way to open the pod's hatch.<p>

"Where are we?" He asked.

"Easy Chief, you've been out for a while." The little computer woman responded. "We're still in the Dawn floating in space."

"Why did you wake me?" He asked again as he looked around his tube.

"Hold on, bringing your suit's systems online." She said, the armored man began to feel the armor activating. "I updated your suit's firmware while you were asleep."

"You've been busy." He said.

"I'm going to activate the ship's artificial gravity generatorâ€¦or what's left of it." She said, and then a voice was heard around the room. Then everything that was floating around suddenly fell on the metallic floor.

"The manual release is right above you." She told him. The armored man looked above his head and found a switch, he pulled it. The hatch then opened, allowing the armored super-soldier to come out from his hushed casket. He walked towards the light woman; she smiled as he approached her.

"Seems like old times huh?" She asked him.

"Ready to get back to work?" He asked back. "I thought you were never going to ask." She said as she crossed her artificial arms.

He then took out the chip from the holo tank and put it inside his helmet, connecting himself with the AI. He felt that nostalgic feeling of coolness drifting inside his head.

The Chief then took out a weapon from a nearby weapon holder, the very same rifle he had placed there years ago. The MA5C Assault Rifle, a little rusty and outdated with the newer model assault rifles inside the Dawn, but it still worked.

"There are hostile life forms inside the ship, Chief." The AI informed.

"Where?" Chief asked.

"The observatory above." She answered. He then found the ships' hologram system. It showed how clearly the Forward Unto Dawn was damaged after the Battle of the Ark where they narrowly escaped from. Only the aft section of the ship remained, the other side was completely sliced off.

The Chief then found an elevator; he forcedly opened the elevator's doors. "Elevators gone." Chief said once he saw that the elevator had crashed down in the bottom floor. "There's no other way to go up except for the stairs." She responded.

"No time for stairs Cortana." Chief said as he looked up inside the elevator shaft.

"You are not thinking ofâ€¦" Cortana said. Then The Chief jumped into the shaft and held himself with on the walls and wires. "â€¦nevermind."

He climbed the shaft easily, his super-human strength and agility, even inside his armor, made it a cake walk or climb. Once he reached the floor of the observatory he was ambushed by someone inside Active Camouflage.

"Grrrâ€¦!" Chief grunted as he wrestled the energy sword wielder, then it came out of camo. It was an Elite or Sangheilli warrior. Chief had to clear himself off the alien, so he quickly grabbed hold of its head and threw it inside the elevator shaft. The alien went on falling into the bottom floor. "I thought we had a truce with the Covenant."

"A lot can happen in four years, Chief." Cortana said. "Observatory's close."

He then made his way to the observatory, which was also used as the control of the aft section of the ship. The Chief then saw that the observatory had been completely been overrun with Covenant foot soldiers. He sneaked behind the one that looked to be the leader, a Covenant Elite Officer.

Once he got close enough, the Chief took out his combat knife and silently assassinated the Elite officer. He then stood up and from the pedestal and control area could see that the observatory's gigantic windows were closed. He has to activate them in order to know where they are, but first he needs to take out the Covenant in the area.

He aimed his powerful Assault Rifle at a Grunt soldier and fired. The bullets ripped through the small alien and alerted the others. "YAAGH! DEMON!" One of them screamed in their alien tongue but the word 'demon' was easy to notice.

Chief then fired at them too, the Elite Minors in the area fired their Plasma Rifles and Storm Rifles. The plasma flew through the air, hitting the metal walls behind the Master Chief. Noticing the immediate danger of the Elites, the Chief decided to take them first and take care of the Grunts later. He took out his Magnum and fired the powerful round at the Elite. The round took out the alien's personal energy shields leaving it unprotected. The Chief unloaded his Assault Rifle's clip on the alien, bringing it down fast.

Master Chief was able to clean house with the rest of the scared Grunts. Apparently he had acted so quickly that he hadn't given the Elites a chance to call for help. Now that the area was safe he headed back to the pedestal to activate the windows. "That one." Cortana said as she placed a waypoint on the correct switch. The

Chief turned it, bringing the area online.

The Chief then walked towards the window to see what they had stumbled on to. "Chiefâ€¦does this remind you of something?" Cortana asked.

"A human worldâ€¦and the Covenant have found it." Master Chief said as he looked at the blue planet below them being swarmed by Covenant cruisers and corvettes.

* * *

><p>Planetside_

Everyone inside the city began to freak out and the authorities could do little to contain the panicking citizens. "IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!" Many citizens screamed as they ran away.

The skies darkened as a gigantic, enormous alien vessel flew above the city. The dark and deep purple of the ship only more intimidated the locals. "Calm down people, calm down!" A metalbending officer yelled to keep the order.

"Officer, is that what I think it is!?" The Avatar asked the metalbending cop as she came running from the crowd.

"That's the strange alien ship, Avatar. HQ says that this one is not the only one, that there are multiple ships across the planet!" The cop answered.

Then a loud sound was heard coming from the enormous ship which stopped the people from moving, freezing them on the spot. A shiny purple light could be seen coming from it. "I don't like the sound of that." The Avatar said as she took a couple of steps back.

Then the purple light began to completely destroy the area it was hitting. The sound of explosions and destruction could be heard beyond the streets of the city but it made the crowd go wilder. "I'm out of here!" The cop said as he left running leaving the Avatar alone. She looked at the massive ship on the skies.

"Now what do I do!?" She yelled as the screams of the crowd muffled her voice.

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><p>UNSC Forward Unto Dawn_

"We are being pulled down!" Cortana yelled as the Chief held onto a nearby pole. "The planet's gravity is pulling us and the Covenant ships around us into it!?|"

"Locate the nearest escape pods!" Chief yelled.

"Done!" Cortana responded as a waypoint appeared in the Chief's Heads-Up-Display. He tried to make his way out of the crumbling observatory using his suit's magnetic boots. "This is completely wrong! We are not even close to the planet's gravitational pull!"

Chief kept making his way to the escape pods when the ship's halls began to be engulfed in flames! "The gravity is pulling the Dawn apart!" Cortana yelled. "Chief, the escape pods now!"

The Master Chief then sprinted towards the escape pods as he heard the area around him breaking apart, passing through several Grunts and Elites who were also trying to escape the exploding ship. The super-soldier ran as lightning towards the escape pods when he found himself entering a corridor which was being ripped apart by the gravitational pull of the planet below.

The Chief couldn't stop in time and was also pull out of the ship along with several Covenant soldiers. He began to free-fall into the planet, outside the atmosphere itself. "Activate the suit's gel layers for impact." The Chief ordered Cortana.

"I don't think they're going to hold!" Cortana yelled.

"They did once, they will do again." Chief responded as he grabbed a nearby Covenant ship metal plate and used it as a heat shield as he began to rip through the atmosphere. He saw how several Covenant corvettes crashed into the planet along with the Dawn.

"Prepare for impact!" Cortana yelled as they approached the ground. The Chief then felt hi armor hardening around the joints and helmet. He closed his eyes and thenâ€¦

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><p>Republic City_

"LOOK!" One of the citizens yelled as they saw several ships crash through the skies, hitting the gigantic alien vessel that floated above the south side of the city. The people tried to get out of the way as the alien cruiser crash down into the city.

Then a different kind of ship crash down as well, it crashed into the park. The Avatar, along with other members of police prevented several buildings from falling on top of the fleeing people flooding the streets. "Evacuate the city now!" An officer screamed from inside a police truck. "The United Forces have already ordered the complete evacuation of all major cities!"

The police officers then began to run along with the people to clear the area, while the Avatar stayed behind. Several pods began to fly away from the bigger ships that were entering atmosphere. The pods crashed into the park, where the different craft had landed on.

The Avatar narrowed her eyes on that location, wanting some answers for this chaos. She then made her way to the park.

The Chief began to re-gain consciousness and stood up. "Chief, incoming pods!" Cortana yelled. Four Elite attack pods landed around the Master Chief. The pods blasted open revealing the Elites. These Elites however sported golden armor and carried energy swords.

"Zealots." Chief said calmly as he reloaded his Assault Rifle. He examined the battleground; several spots were to avoid their swords like the remains of the Dawn and pieces of Covenant Corvettes.

"GRAAAGH!" One of the Elite Zealots screamed as it charged at the Chief.

The Master Chief avoided the sword slash swiftly, and threw a plasma grenade at the golden elite, making it explode in a cloud of blue mist. The other Zealots charged towards the super-soldier, he began to shoot at them with his weapon but their shields were too strong, being able to resist the multiple shots from the Assault Rifle. Chief knew he wasn't a match physically against three Zealots alone. He thought quickly and threw a frag grenade into his feet as the Zealots ran towards him. As they got closer fast he jumped above them, avoiding their slashes as the grenade exploded. The explosion and shrapnel from the grenade was able to partially destroy their energy shields.

The distraction allowed the Chief to grab the dead Zealot's energy sword and turn it on. The Zealots then grunted in anger on seeing the Demon using such holy weapon. They once again charged at the super-soldier.

This time the Chief was ready, and defended himself with his sword. Slicing one of the Zealot's arms off and leaving it out of the battle. The Master Chief then struck the other Zealot in the head, disorientating it for a moment, allowing the Chief to decapitate the alien.

A single Zealot was left, it looked angry. Moving its mandibles around showing its unpleased emotions. "Grrrâ€¦" It gargled.

"I think you made it angry." Cortana said.

"You don't say." Chief responded as he stood in a defensive stance in case the Elite attacked head on, which they mostly do.

Then, noticing in his motion tracker, the Chief saw a grey dot coming closer to them. "What the" Chief said with surprise. A young human girl came up towards the wreckage.

She looked to be stunned at what she was seeing: A towering green-armored man and a golden armored monster.

"Get down!" Chief yelled as he noticed the Zealot charge towards the girl. The Chief then jumped towards the alien, tackling it to the ground. But the Zealot proved to be stronger, lifting the Chief with ease and throwing him to the ground. "Agh!"

"Ahhhâ€¦." The girl said as the golden monster stood in front of her with its glowing sword. She then snapped out of her surprise and quickly stomped the ground, earthbending the earth below the alien and making a sinkhole below it. The Zealot fell down the dark hole; the girl then closed the ground.

She then sighed, but then another towering figure appeared in front of her.

"The perimeter is not safe, get me to the closest UNSC facility in the area now!" The Chief ordered.

"The what?" She asked confusedly.

3. The Star-Lord

**Republic City**

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><p>"Tell me where the nearest UNSC NAVCOM building is!" The Chief demanded as he reloaded his Assault Rifle. Avatar Korra stood frozen at the presence of the giant in front of her, never had she seen such being before only in stories.<p>

"Theâ€¦what?" She asked the tall green armored man. His golden faceplate shined as he looked at her, she couldn't see his face making him even more terrifying to the sight.

"Chief, I think she doesn't know what the UNSC is." Cortana said inside the Master Chief's head. He listened to her companion's words and took notice. The Chief then decided that he should better continue on looking for a way to prevent the Covenant from hailing nearby fleets that there was a human planet nearby.

"Wait!" Korra yelled as the Master Chief was starting to leave the crash site of the Dawn. He turned.

"What is it?" He asked.

"Are youâ€¦you the Star-Lord?" She asked him. Inside his helmet, the Master Chief raised an eyebrow as Cortana giggled at the name.

"Tell her yes." Cortana said as she finished giggling. The Chief complied since he might as well not reveal his identity and the UNSC's just yet.

"Yes." The Chief responded the Avatar's question as he turned around again and went on walking down the grass hill. Korra didn't know what to say but there was someone who could help her with this.

The Chief, now alone, could better analyze the situation at hand. "Where are we exactly?" He asked.

"Checking coordinate impact dataâ€¦_we've asked you to give up your family, your childhood, your futureâ€¦_" Cortana began saying a more digitalized voice. The Master Chief hearing this quickly took the chip off his helmet to see what was wrong with his companion.

"Cortana?" The Chief asked. The AI's hologram then appeared on top of the chip.

"I'm sorryâ€¦it's the crash, I'm fine." Cortana responded.

"Something was wrong even before we left the Dawn." Chief said.

"Chief, reallyâ€¦I'm fine." Cortana insisted with a digitalized voice again, not sounding as smooth as before.

"Cortana." Master Chief said with a low, commanding voice telling her

to say the truth.

"I was put into service eight years ago." Cortana said.

"Eight yearsâ€¦" Chief repeated now looking at how much time has passed.

"AIs deteriorate after seven, Chief." Cortana revealed.

"Halsey." Chief said.

"Chief " Cortana responded.

"We need to find Halsey." Master Chief said.

"Chief please!" Cortana said as her voice cracked a little.

"She made youâ€¦she can fix you." Chief explained.

"I won't recover from rampancy Chief." Cortana said.

"If we can just get back to Earth and find Halsey, she can fix this." Chief promised.

"Don't make a girl a promise you can't keep." Cortana responded with a low voice. Then the sound of a Phantom dropship was heard as it flew passed them and into the city. "We need to move!"

Cortana's hologram disappeared, and then Chief placed the chip back into his helmet. He looked towards the city and then to his rifle. Only three magazines leftâ€¦he would have find ammo as he went on. Hopefully these people have something that could pass off as a weaponâ€¦hopefully.

* * *

><p>Air Temple Island_

Korra quickly made her way to Air Temple Island; she had seen something that she had only read in storybooks as a kid. As the Avatar she has to protect the world and right now the world was in a state of complete chaos as the Beasts have showed up.

Once Korra arrived on the port of the island she saw several singular pods around the whole area, even some that gone through the roof of the temple.

"Master Tenzin!" Korra yelled as she ran down the halls of the Air Temple. As she ran by she saw the bodies of multiple dismembered Air Acolytes throughout the wooden floors. Korra almost puked once the stench of burnt flesh entered her nose.

She kept going until she arrived into the hallway that leads to Tenzin's room. As she ran towards Tenzin's quarters, one of those beasts went flying through the door of the room and into the hallway. It slammed into the hard wooden wall as it fell down in the ground dead.

"Gah!" Korra yelled. She looked for who had blasted the monster away, it had been Tenzin. "Tenzin!" Korra yelled as she went to see how her

master was doing.

"Korra!" Tenzin said but then he grunted as he felt a sharp pain in his shoulder. He then fell on his right knee, it was an open wound caused by the beast.

"Tenzin what happened!?" Korra asked her master.

"Theyâ€¦those monsters crashed through the roofâ€¦dozens of them. They began murdering the Acolytesâ€¦the White Lotus guards did all they could butâ€¦I told Pemma to take the kids to the South Pole on Oogiâ€¦I..." Tenzin tried to say but the wound was too deep.

"Hold on." Korra said as she ran towards the bathroom and opened the sink. She then filled a cup with water and ran back to Tenzin. "I'm going to try to heal your wound."

She bended the water off the cup and then used her healing abilities to heal Tenzin's opened wound. He gasped as the water touched his injury but then relaxed. "They carried swordsâ€¦swords of light that could cut anything. Could absorb fire, evaporate water and slice earth." Tenzin said as he remembered the beasts. "But could not overcome air."

"Where are the other monsters?" Korra asked him.

"I used Airbending to propel them off the island and into the bay." Tenzin answered. "It goes against all codes of the Air Nomads butâ€¦but I fear that these are living things but ruthless monsters with no sense of life and dignity."

"Tenzin todayâ€¦today I saw the Star-Lord." Korra bluntly revealed to him.

"The Star-Lord?" Tenzin asked. "But that's just a story, how could youâ€¦?"

"He fell from the sky like the Beasts but was fighting them. He was enormous, had green armor on and his face mask was golden as the purest gold." Korra described the Star-Lord. "And he carried this long thing that shot stuff and he defeated three golden beasts alone."

"Hmmâ€¦" Tenzin began thinking. "Let's go to the library, it's time for me to tell you a story."

* * *

><p>The Library, Air Temple Island_

They walked along the small library that contained some books, manuscripts and weird stuff that Aang had been collecting across the years. "This is the last report sent by two archeologists twenty years ago. In their last report they said that they had discovered something beyond anything we have ever seen. That beneath the soil below our feet lied another world, much like ours here on top but untouched by man."

"Great, but what does this have to do with anything?" Korra asked.

"In the story of the Ancients and the Rings, it said that the Ancients built entire worlds whose center housed another land. Made to be safe haven for any one that was beyond the reach of the Haven. The Star-Lords are said to be the inheritors of the Ancients' wishes and responsibility, this had been the story until today." Tenzin said.

"Are you saying that there's actually untouched land underground?!" Korra asked surprise.

"I don't know Korra, butâ€¦if it's true then that would explain why the Beasts have come hereâ€¦they seek to destroy the Ancients' wishes and the Star-Lords have sent their champion to stop them." Tenzin responded. "And to reclaim what was once lost."

"Let me guessâ€¦as the Avatar I must help the Star-Lord defeat the evil beasts and secure the center of the worldâ€¦correct?" Korra asked in voice that imitated Tenzin's.

"Indeed you will." Tenzin said. "Head to the city and locate the Star-Lord, I'll head to the Police Station and look for Chief Beifong and help in saving the city. You Korra, must save the world."

"Great." Korra responded.

* * *

><p>Republic City_

The Master Chief moved through corner to corner, making sure he wouldn't be ambushed by any Jackal sniper. The streets had been evacuated; it was all desolated; only trash was left on the ground as probably the citizens panicked upon seeing the Covenant ships in the sky.

"Chief, I'm getting this weird signal coming from nowhereâ€¦it sounds like it was trying to say something, it was human, but it was muffled." Cortana informed the Chief as he assassinated a sleeping Grunt.

"What do you mean?" He asked.

"I don't know butâ€¦hold onâ€¦I found where the signal is coming from." Cortana said.

"Where?" Chief asked again.

"Wait... the signal has the codes from the UNSC Infinity, a vessel that was commissioned after the war." Cortana said. "But something's not rightâ€¦the planet is triangulating the signal to theâ€¦the center of the planet?"

"How?" Chief asked as he battled an Elite Officer.

"This worldâ€¦its Forerunner." Cortana revealed. "It's a Shield World."

"That can't be right." Chief said as he shot the Elite in the head

with his magnum pistol. The Elite fell on the ground dead; he had annihilated an entire squadron of Elites and Grunts.

"I have tapped into the Covenant's battlenet and I have found out that the Covenant ships that were falling with us never actually crashed but entered the planet." Cortana informed. "If they could've passed through the crust then it's not far off that the Infinity might've also entered it once it found our distress beacon."

"Any entrance into the planet on foot?" Chief asked.

"Yes, 1000 miles do north; I'm marking a waypoint to it." Cortana answered as she placed a waypoint in Chief's HUD. "It will take you at top speed an hour to get there."

"Understood." Chief said, he prepared to sprint whenâ€¦"Hey!"â€¦He heard a voice.

"It's her again isn't it?" Cortana asked the Chief. He stood up straight as he saw the human girl running down the derelict streets.

"Stop and get down on the ground!" Chief yelled to her. She, not knowing what to do, did what he said and jumped onto the ground. Master Chief saw that in the roofs in the end of the city stood a Jackal sniper. The Chief took out his pistol and quickly aimed at the Jackal and fired. BANG! The sound of the gun was heard, but the Jackal had already fallen down the rooftop.

Korra looked up again to see the Star-Lord looking at her as he placed his loud device back on his right tight. "Listen, if you keep following me you're going to get into trouble." Master Chief said.

Korra stood quickly and looked up to the Star-Lord. "My name is Korra and I am the Avatar of this worldâ€¦Mr. Star-Lord sir." She said with a nervous voice.

"Avatar?" Chief asked.

"Yes, ummâ€¦I can bend the four elements and I kind of represent everyone in this world." Korra said as she nervously laughed and scratched the back of her head.

"You are far too inexperienced to represent anyone." Chief frankly said as he began to walk away.

"Waitâ€¦I have to go with you." Korra said.

"Negative, you would just get in the way." Chief said without looking back.

"Like it or not, I am the Avatar and it's my job to protect this world so you might as well deal with it." Korra responded as she ran to him.

The Master Chief looked at the young girl in front of him, she looked more nervous than mad but he could see the drive in her eyes. "Okay." He said as he kept walking.

Korra smiled, the thought of helping a fabled Star-Lord was incredible. "By any caseâ€¦do you a means of fast travel?" He asked.

"Actually, I might have some friends to help us out." Korra said as she rubbed her chin in the thought.

4. Into The Howling Dark

**Over The Mountains**

* * *

><p>"When you said a means of transportation I thought that you meant something faster than thisâ€¦" Chief said as The Avatar, known as Korra and her friends and he rode inside a 'borrowed' Police Airship.<p>

"Chiefâ€¦at this rate we would be arriving at the waypoint by midnight. I don't think that the Infinity would like it to stay inside this planet for too long." Cortana said.

"â€¦I need to get the objective or this world is at risk." The Master Chief added.

"Ehâ€¦don't worry, uhhâ€¦this is the fastest that the airship can go." Korra said as she pointed to the steam engine of the ship.

"I can't believe it! An actual Star-Lord is standing right in front of me! Awesome!" Bolin said with complete happiness and amazement as he looked at the SPARTAN.

"Cool it Bolin, I don't think that the space man likes to be watch every second." Mako, Bolin's older brother, said as he held his younger brother from touching the Chief's armor.

"The way your suit is made is years beyond what Future Industries can do." Asami, Mako's girlfriend said as she looked at the Chief. "Is it some kind of metal?"

"Classified." The Chief replied. "There's something going on below this world and if I don't get there the Covenant might doom this planet."

"You mean the Beasts? They have a name?" Korra asked.

"They are called the Covenant, a once powerful empire alliance of variousâ€¦aliens." The Master Chief explained. "I thought that we had them beaten but it seems a faction of them survived."

"Why would they challenge the Star-Lords in the first place?" Bolin asked.

"First contact happened almost twenty-seven years ago, when they attacked one of our worlds, Harvest." The Chief revealed. "We got slaughtered, the planet's skies burned in fire."

"But how? Star-Lords are mighty, spirit-like." Asami said.

"Chief, something is following us." Cortana told the Chief. The Master Chief stood up and walked towards a nearby window.

"What is it?" Korra asked the armored super-soldier.

"Banshees." The Chief answered.

"What?" Korra asked again, then suddenly the sounds of screaming women loudly came from the outside as two purple blurs passed them. "What was that?!"

"Covenant air vehicles." The Chief responded as he took out his Assault Rifle. "Prepare for impact."

The air ship was then shot by the incoming Covenant Banshees, hot plasma burned through the steel frame making the motors explode. The air ship was now in descending course to the mountains below. Everyone inside the ship screamed except for the Master Chief. The Chief looked at his back, and nodded.

"Everyone around me!" He ordered, the teenagers quickly latched on him. Then the thrusters on his back activated, propelling him and his companions into the steel roof of the air ship. The Chief extended his arms so that the falling steel wouldn't crush the teenagers, his energy shields flickered as the debris fell on him.

He and the others flew right out of the air ship, making it out right before it crashed into the mountains. But the thruster pack on the Chief's back was not made to fly and they suddenly began to fall. Luckily, the landed on a snowy land-slide free of trees or rocks and began to roll down to safety as the air ship exploded far away from them.

"Ughâ€¦let's not do that againâ€¦ever." Bolin said as he sat and rubbed his head.

"Everyone okay?" The Chief asked as his energy shields re-charged.

"Yeahâ€¦" Mako said as he took his head out of the snow.

"Me too." Asami added.

"That wasâ€¦cool." Korra said as she stood up and the snow on her fell onto the ground.

"Chief we are about 20 miles from the objective and the Banshees have retreated back to the city." Cortana informed the SPARTAN. The Master Chief still wasn't sure if the humans on this world could defend themselves against the might of the Covenant but once the Infinity is brought up, they would help.

"We are twenty-eight miles away from our destination; we must make haste now since the Covenant air forces think we are dead." The Master Chief said as he placed his Assault Rifle on his back and started to walk towards his waypoint mark.

"Hold onâ€¦we almost died back there, we have to rest." Mako said.

"We don't have time to rest, the Covenant are already ahead of us." The Chief responded as he kept walking.

"Chief, we are not super like you, we're tired." Asami said, supporting her boyfriend's claims. The Chief stopped and turned around.

"Ten minutes." He clearly said as he sat on a nearby rock and began to count his ammunition rounds.

The teenagers then rested, looking at their surviving inventory for food and water. The Chief looked at his rifle, he inspected it deeply.

"The Covenant Battlenet is mess down inside the planet, Chief. They seem to have found something that is not goodâ€¦at all." Cortana reported to the Chief.

"The Flood?" The Chief asked.

"Not from what sounds likeâ€¦something different. Aside from that, the signal coming from the Infinity is increasing alarmingly." Cortana continued. "We better hurry."

The Master Chief looked at his gun once moreâ€¦"When we get back to Earthâ€¦" He said.

"â€¦Let's worry about the Covenant first Chief." Cortana interrupted.

Some feet away, Avatar Korra and her companions rested after such troublesome fall. "Hey Korra, I think that the Star-Lord over there is kind of nuts." Bolin murmured.

"I think that he's talking with a spirit." Korra responded.

"What makes you say that?" Asami asked.

"Well, Tenzin told me that the Ancients and the Star-Lords are capable of conversing with Spirits and that the Spirits personally come to them." Korra answered.

"Whoever he's talking to must be pretty special." Mako said.

"Why?" Korra asked.

"He's talking in a very soft tone, softer than the way he speaks to us." Mako responded. Then suddenly, the Master Chief stood up from his rocky seat.

"Rest's over, let's move." The Chief said as he began to walk towards his objective again. The teens groaned at the thought of walking miles, but followed the SPARTAN on.

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity, orbiting above the planet

"The signal is coming from where?" Captain Andrew Del Rio asked his commander and naval officers.

"It's coming from within the planet sir." Commander Thomas Lasky answered. The other naval officers in the bridge began to re-check the coordinate data.

"It must be some kind of error." Captain Del Rio said. "This world is currently off limits by the UNSC FLEETCOM, according to the records, this is an Insurrectionist planet."

"Looks pretty backwards to me sir, they barely have plains." Commander Lasky said. "But the scanners from the Infinity don't lie; the signal is coming from within the planet."

Then the shipboard AI appeared on the holographic panel table that detailed the planet that the UNSC Infinity orbited. "Should I order Commander Palmer to send SPARTAN Fire teams; Castle and Shadow for ground deployments?" Roland, the ship AI asked.

"No, not yet." Captain Del Rio responded. "Not until we know what that damned signal is saying."

The Captain and the Commander then looked at the planet below from the bridge. It looked a lot like the Earth; it could as well be its twin world.

* * *

><p>Tunnel to Interior of Planet

"This is it." The Chief said as he looked at unearthed hole in the ground, big enough to allow him entrance.

"That's just a hole in the ground." Bolin said.

The Master Chief, ignoring what he said, descends down the hole. They followed nevertheless. Once they got down deeper into the tunnel, the Master Chief turned on the built-in flashlight inside his Assault Rifle which surprised the teens following him.

"That's definitely not a natural cave formation." Cortana said as they were stopped by a quite big metallic Forerunner gate. It was sealed shut.

"Howa re we going to get through?" Korra asked the Chief. The Master Chief began to move his hand over the gate, and then he stopped it on a certain spot. It began to glow.

The gate began to move, startling the young benders. The gates opened revealing a corridor that went deeper until a small elevator could be seen at the end.

The Master Chief looked at his surroundings, and once he knew it was safe he proceeded forward. "Wowâ€¦" Asami said as she looked at the fantastic metal works on the walls, floors and ceilings. Even the stairs going down looked amazing, this must be the work of the Ancients.

"Portal gate." Cortana told the Chief.

"I'm going to tell you that what comes next could be extremely

dangerous, are you ready?" The Master Chief asked the group.

"We're ready." The all said in unison. The Chief nodded.

"Cortana, open the gate to send us directly to the core." The Master Chief ordered. Then in front of him, a swirling purplish-black portal opened. He walked towards itâ€¦he turned to face them again. "I'll go first."

He walked inside andâ€¦he was gone. "Do we go?" Korra asked her friends.

"Uhâ€¦looks like fun." Bolin responded.

"I know I'm going to regret this." Mako added.

"We have to do this you guys, our people are up there fighting against the Beast or Covenant or whatever they're called. We have to help the Star-Lord!" Asami said. Agreeing to her, they all walked towards the portal and jumped in.

* * *

><p>The Core of the Planet

Once they arrived to the other side, the first feeling they got was nausea.

"I thinkâ€¦I think I'm going to throw up." Mako said as he tried to prevent a mess.

"My lunch is in my throat." Bolin added.

"Pullâ€¦yourselves up." Korra said as they recovered from such trip. "Are we in theâ€¦"

"This is the core." The Chief said as he stood in front of them. The hollow interior of the planet surprised all of them, only a circular sphere floated in the middle. From the sides, several spires fed the center with energy.

"Chief that's where the signal's coming from, from that satellite." Cortana informed. The Infinity isn't hereâ€¦but how did it know its signal code? "But that doesn't leave out the possibility that the Infinity is orbiting the planet."

"What do you mean?" The Chief asked.

"Place me in the terminal." Cortana said. The Chief then took out the chip from his helmet and inserted it inside the center terminal. The appearance of Cortana's hologram took Korra and her friends for surprise, almost as surprise as finding out that their world is hollow.

"Thatâ€¦that's the Spirit." Asami said.

"Yeahâ€¦" Korra responded.

"The satellite used the signal of the Infinity right? It's probably on orbit right now, we have to warn them about what's going on since

most of the Covenant capital ships are inside the planet." Cortana said.

"What do you plan?" Chief asked.

"We can use the satellite to send them another signal to warn them." Cortana responded.

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity, orbiting above the planet

"Sir, additional scans confirm Covenant Storm presence on the planet. But minimal." A naval officer reported to the captain.

"Storm? With their weaponry they could annihilate any army this world would throw at them." Captain Del Rio said. "Prepare the ODST forâ€¦"

The Infinity then began to shakeâ€¦"What's going on?" Commander Lasky asked.

Roland then appeared on the holographic table. "We are being pulled by the planet!" Roland said.

"How?!" Captain Del Rio yelled.

"I don't know but we are heading straight into the planet's surface!" Roland responded.

"Make the engines to go back!" Commander Lasky ordered.

"I can'tâ€¦they won't respond." Roland responded sounding worried.

Lasky and Del Rio then turned and looked as the Infinity drew closer and closer into the planet. This is nuts but something must be going on the planet!

5. The Didact Cometh

**The Core of the Planet**

* * *

><p>"There's something wrong." Cortana said.<p>

"What is it?" The Chief asked.

"The beams coming from the sides are what are creating the interfering with the signal; we'll need to take them to contact the Infinity." Cortana answered. The Master Chief looked from the beams were coming from, the east and west sides of the center.

"Can you get us there?" Chief asked again.

"Opening a gate towards the first and second pylon." Cortana responded as another portal opened near them. "Pull me and let's go."

The Chief took the chip from the terminal and put in his helmet once more. He turned towards the Avatar and her companions who were still amazed by the interior of their world. "Listen up." Chief said with an authoritative voice, and they turned to look at his golden visor. "There are two pylons that are making a shield around the center; we need to take them out."

"How?" Korra asked.

"I will head towards the left pylon inside the cliffs, you and your group head towards the right one, inside the chasm." The Chief ordered.

"You're letting us go alone?" Mako asked as the sound of them fighting the armed aliens sounded outrageous. "We are going to get killed!"

"No you won't, you have something I don't haveâ€¦you can control the elements around you, and one of you has the brains." The Master Chief said, they looked at each other again and nodded. "Good."

The SPARTAN-II walked towards the leftward portal, and stepped inside and disappeared. Team Avatar, as they have dubbed themselves looked at the portal they were going to step into. "Here we goâ€¦" Korra said.

They went inside and they were gone once more into the unknown.

* * *

><p>Left Side Pylon_

The Master Chief slowly made his way through the rocky cliffs and valleys, with his Assault Rifle at the ready. "Chief while I have been looking around the files that I just obtained from that terminal, I've found out the name of this Shield World and its purpose." Cortana said.

"What is it?" Chief asked as he peeked around a corner.

"The planet is designate 'Requiem' by the Forerunners. Its purpose was that it was a military headquartersâ€¦" Cortana answered.

"Wait, listen." The Chief interrupted her as shots of plasma were heard. He ran through several exposed caves and found bodies of Covenant foot soldiers and the remains of several Phantom dropships. "What happened here?" The Chief asked Cortana.

"Yeahâ€¦I was about to tell you thatâ€¦" Cortana was about to continue when The Master Chief was shot on the back. His shields lighted up but held, he quickly turned around aiming his gun. That was fastâ€¦faster than plasma fire. He heard the screams of several Elites and Jackals being killed or worse.

Red dots appeared in his motion tracker, but something told the Chief it wasn't Covenant. Then from the top of the cliff a huge figure jumped down and onto the SPARTAN-II. The Chief didn't see it coming, the robotic looking foe then opened it's 'face' and a human burning skull screamed at the Master Chief.

The super-soldier acted quickly and freed his right hand and punched it away with one good strike. The mechanical beast jolted back, closing its false face once more and teleporting away. "What was that?" The Chief asked Cortana.

"That must be what the Covenant were jabbering about in their battlenet, it's definitely of Forerunner originâ€¦some kind of defensive AI." Cortana answered. "Chief multiple hostiles! I recommend you to make a run for the pylon now!"

The Chief looking at his motion tracker saw too many red dots too count, he turned to see what was coming. Dozens of dog-like robot beasts were running towards him with one of those big ones leading them. Before the Chief could make his way towards the pylon, several Phantom dropships appeared, and began shooting the robotic AIs.

Special Operations Elites and Grunts were drop down, and began fighting the dog-like AIs. The Master Chief in the middle of a battle between the Covenant and the defense AI of the planet, the Master Chief did the only thing possibleâ€¦he began to mix things up a little.

The super-soldier began fighting both sides, at the same time. Ripping through troops of defense AIs and Covenant Spec Ops troops, filling their black armors with lead.

He had arrived towards the Forerunner pylon. "Chief, up there!" Cortana yelled as explosions of battle were heard. "Those defense AIs, they are called Prometheans, and it seems like the Covenant woke them up!"

The Chief nodded to her information as he dodges plasma fire while he headed towards the top of the tower that connected to the pylon. On the top, one of those Promethean soldiers waited for him. "That's a Promethean Knight, butâ€¦but it looks different." Cortana informed.

The Promethean Knight had orange crystals on its back, and its facial mask was different from the one that attacked the Master Chief at first. The Promethean Knight then fired at the Chief, its gun firing orange rays at every the direction like a shotgun. The Chief covered himself from the fire, his shields being hit just a little. He then saw a plasma grenade lying on the floor, he took it.

With speeds that rivaled those of fast-paced vehicles, the Master Chief charged towards the Promethean Knight. It then took out a hard-light axe and swung it towards the Chief. The SPARTAN dodged the swing and placed the primed plasma grenade on the creature. The grenade exploded, making the knight explode in blue-orange light. "Was that data transfer?" Cortana asked herself.

"What?" The Chief asked.

"That thingâ€¦it sounded like it screamed painfully as it died but through dataâ€¦look." Cortana answered and 'mentally pointed' at the glowing orb on the floor. It was what is left of the Promethean Knight, pure data. "Quickly head towards the pylon!"

The Chief ran towards the connecting bridge and took the elevator towards the top. There he tried to contact the Infinity once more but failing again. At the top, he found the source of the beam. "How do we close it?" The Chief asked.

"There, the lever." Cortana said as she placed an objective mark on the metallic lever. The Chief headed towards it and began to pull. The lever was hard, as if it was made to be pulled by something stronger than a SPARTAN. With great strength, the Master Chief pulled with all his might until he closed the beam all together. Then the frequency from the Infinity cleared up a bit.

"One down, one to go." Cortana said. A portal opened and the Chief ran inside of it.

* * *

><p>Right Side Pylon_

Team Avatar moved through a battlefield, avoiding the attacks of the Covenant as best as they could as Banshees fell from the sky. "Move! Move! Move!" Mako ordered his friends as they ran across the opened caverns that exploded from the plasma bombardments.

"This is suicidal!" Bolin yelled as he covered his head as pebbles fell on top of him as he ran. Korra earthbended walls of rock to prevent the battle from reaching them but every time she raised one, a Covenant Wraith tank would destroy it with its plasma mortar.

"That must be the pylon!" Asami pointed as the towering device came into view.

"Keep moving!" Korra yelled as the Promethean Knights began spawning around them.

"I'm not hearing the Covenant anymore." Bolin said as he ran.

"Thatâ€¦that meansâ€¦" Mako tried to say but he was already experiencing fatigue. "Darn...you Bolinâ€¦and yourâ€¦duplings."

Then a Promethean Knight jumped in front of them, it looked at them with its eyes and began to lowly growl. "Gah! One of those things!" Bolin yelled as he backed away.

"Stay backâ€¦" Korra said as they backed away slowly. Then Korra in one full motion earthbended the ground below the Promethean and crushed it on to the nearby rock wall. "Let's go before it stands up!"

They all began again to sprint towards the pylon and maybe rest.

Once they arrived to the pylon's base, they saw that the Covenant that had been stationed there had been all killed. Several ships and vehicles littered the ground and ancient bunkers. The Prometheans were moving the bodies of the dead Covenant away and were dissolving them with their weapons of light.

"Alright, here's the plan, we sneak through themâ€¦" Korra murmured.

"Sneak?" Mako asked.

"I know, I usually go for the punch but this is something else. The only entrance that we I can see is that one." Korra pointed towards the opened gate into the tower that connected to the pylon.

"What if there's more up top?" Asami asked. That was a good question, Korra began to look around.

"Ah." Korra said as she found a Covenant weapon on the floor, it was small but it was heavier than what it looked. "We used this."

"Do you even know how to work one of those things?" Mako asked.

"I just press the button and bam, how hard could it be?" Korra rhetorically asked. They made their way towards the entrance, the Promethean Knights and Crawlers didn't seem to notice them. For now, Korra's surprisingly smart plan was working.

The smell of the dried alien blood made Bolin want to hurl, but he kept it together once they reached the entrance. They went up and found themselves looking at a flying machine looking at them. "Uh oh." Korra said as her blue eyes widened as a Promethean Knight appeared behind them.

As fast as she could, she pointed the Plasma Pistol at the Knight and held on to the trigger for a second and fired. A fat green blast was shot out of the small yet heavy alien weapon and hit the Promethean Knight. The blast destroyed the machine's protective layer and made it fall on its back. The flying machine with round wings went for its aid as Team Avatar towards the connecting bridge.

Once they reached the elevator and made it go up, they could relax a bit. "That was the closest time I've come to getting killed." Bolin said.

"That wasâ€¦too close." Mako added as he adjusted his jacket and hair. He looked at his hand, sweat. This has been really chaotic.

"What happens when we reach the top?" Asami asked Korra.

"I'm not sure, but things open up when you put your hands on them. I think we'll see how to turn off this thing once we get there." Korra answered.

After a handful of seconds more, they reached the top of the pylon. When the elevator's doors opened they were met with a radiant flash of light that came from the bean that the pylon shot out to the core.

"You see anything?" Mako asked as he covered his eyes.

"Uhhâ€¦" Korra said as she looked around while she partially blocked her eyes. "Found something."
>She walked towards a lever on the ground; it could probably turn off the pylon. She closed her eyes and pulled. "Ehngggâ€¦." Korra grunted

as she pulled but it didn't move.<p>

"This thing is stuck pretty well." Korra said. "I might need some help."

They all then pulled on the lever, but it didn't give in. They pulled and pulled until a crank was heard. "Well at least we moved it a little." Asami said.

Korra then got around and began to push it down with her right leg. "Okay I won't doâ€¦Bolin get over here." She ordered.

Bolin then pushed down with his more muscled leg down the lever while the others pulled. Slowly the crank moved, until it finally went down enough to affect the beam. The pylon's beam began to slowly die out until it completely stopped.

"Yes!" They all rejoiced as a portal opened on the other side. "That must be the Chief." Asami said.

"Let's go!" Korra said as they all ran towards the portal.

* * *

><p>Core_

"Where are we now?" Mako asked as he looked around, he then saw a gigantic orange sphere floating on the other side of the metallic wall.

"We are in the center." The Master Chief answered as he walked pass them.

"That's the core?" Korra asked.

"Yes." The Chief simply responded as he kept walking towards the left side gate. Team Avatar followed the SPARTAN.

"All of this feels like one big nightmare." Mako said as he looked at the glowing sphere beyond the wall.

The gate opened and they were met with a battle already in progress. The Covenant seemed to be already trying to access the core but were intercepted by the Promethean Knights and Watchers who glowed in deep blue color.

"We have to make our way through the firefight and reach the control panel of the core on the other side." The Master Chief explained.

"Let's go through that side." Korra said as she pointed towards the side that was less populated with aliens.

"Good." The Chief said as he went towards that direction. Korra got a successful smirk at her brilliance this day.

They all went through the left side, defending themselves from both Elites and Knights. The Chief ripped through them with his Assault Rifle and Magnum pistol. Mako lightning bolts at the incoming Crawlers who exploded at contact with the electricity ray.

Korra shot fire towards the Watchers who didn't seem to tolerate it too much. Once they reached to the other side, close to the panels a golden Elite and a crystal-back Knight fought.

The Promethean Knight was shooting with a weapon that seemed to be vaporizing Grunts on contact with a big boom. The Elite avoided the attacks while it shot green balls of plasma from his Fuel Rod Gun. "Stay back." Chief ordered as he ran towards the Elite, he took out his combat knife and stabbed on the back.

The Elite fell on to the ground dead, then the Master Chief took the Fuel Rod and began to fire it at the Knight with greater accuracy. Once it was stunned back, the Chief sprinted so fast towards it that he looked like a blur in Korra's eyes.

The Chief struck the Promethean Knight in the gut, ripping through the shell and going deep into the circuitry inside. With his enhanced super-strength he ripped his hand out of the AI warrior. He quickly jumped away and when he landed on his feet, the Knight exploded into thousands of pieces.

"Howâ€¦how did you make it explode?" Asami asked the Chief as she came out of her amazement.

"Fragmentation grenade." He responded blandly as they walked towards the two pillars that connected to the satellite.

"Chief the contacts." Cortana said, the Chief looked at the contacts that had the symbols of the Reclaimer on them and placed his hand on them.

"Infinity, this is Sierra One One Seven from the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn do you copy?" The Chief said as he tried to message the Infinity.

"_InfinTy this is Sieeraa one One sevenâ€¦_" The satellite repeated what the Chief said. The SPARTAN looked at it.

"Infinity do you read!?" The Chief asked again and the satellite repeated what he said once more. The orange lined satellite began to float up.

The fighting Covenant and Prometheans stopped their conflict and looked at the rising sphere.

"Chief...Chief let go of the contacts." Cortana said.

"Find us an exit." The Chief said.

"Don't wait on my account." Cortana responded. The Master Chief turned towards the teens and quickly moved them into cover. Then the satellite released a shockwave that knocked the Elites and Knights into the ground.

The Chief and Korra then peeked over their cover to see what was going on, from the bottom of the sphere came out a pedestal and something was kneeled over it.

The Chief stopped from peeking while Korra kept on looking,

completely dumbstruck from what she was looking at.

On the pedestal, the humanoid stood up and pieces of armor came to him. His arms, legs, and torso was then quickly armored up with some kind of protection similar in appearance of that of the Promethean Knights.

He then turned to look at where they where at and Korra quickly moved her head on to cover.

"_So fades the great harvest of my betrayal._" It said with a voice that could be heard everywhere. With a wave of his hand, all of the Prometheans that glowed deep-blue in color changed to dark orange. And the entire Covenant around kneeled before its presence. It then moved its floating pedestal towards where the Chief and Team Avatar were taking cover at.

"_Even these beasts recognize what you were oblivious to humans; your nobility has blinded youâ€¦ as ever._" It said as with a thought erased the cover they were behind of. The Master Chief immediately stood up and aimed at the towering being but it with its hand froze the Chief in place. Korra was freeze too but the others were not. The Chief and she were then carried towards the alien by an unknown force that the alien commanded with its hand. They couldn't talk as they looked at the being, its eyes were deep, it had no pronounce nose and its bestial teeth were visible out of its mouth. Fur covered a portion of its head but what it was more surprising, it was way taller and bigger than the Chief in musculature and high even within the armor.

"_The Librarian left little to chanceâ€¦didn't she? Turning my own guardiansâ€¦my own world against me. But what hubris to believe she could hide her pets from me forever._" It said as he mentioned the name of an Ancient. Korra was not extremely confused but scared as well, the being moved its six-fingered hand around as it looked at Korra with a confused glance and then at the Chief with a more aggressive sight.

"_If you haven't mastered even these primitives then Man has not achieved the Mantleâ€¦_" It glanced at the Elites and the rest of the Covenant. "_â€¦Your ascendance might yet still be prevented."_

"_Time was your ally humans, but now it has abandoned you._" It said with venom in its voice.

"_The Forerunnersâ€¦have returned._" It said as a masked that resembled a skull assembled over its head. "_This tombâ€¦is now yours._"

It then threw them away towards where they were hiding. The Master Chief made it able so when he fell, Korra would fall on top of him so she didn't break any bones. They landed on the metallic floor and were surrounded by the others.

"Korra! Chief!" They yelled as the Forerunner ascended back to his sphere, into the Cryptum.

The Master Chief stood up and woke Korra up in a hurry. "Slipspace rupture! Run!" Cortana yelled. The Chief turned and then push them

all away into an opening and as the Cryptum went up into air the Chief jumped to join them and a white light surrounded the whole area.

6. Next Stop, Certain Death

The Core

* * *

><p>"Chief." Cortana said. "Chief!"<p>

The Master Chief awoken and stood up quickly looking up as the core was collapsing on itself. "What's happening?" He asked.

"That...Didact. He manipulated infinity's signal to get us to release him!" Cortana answered. "He's moving the satellite into slipspace destabilizing the core. "

As she said that, two Covenant Phantom dropships were pulled into a crash course into each other, the explosion of their impact shook the Chief. One of the dropships exploded as the other one crashed into the canyon the SPARTAN was standing within. "The Didact's leaving! We have to find a portal before the whole system collapses!"

"Where are the others?" The Master Chief asked as he looked for the teenagers who were accompanying him.

"Marking their locations, we need to get them and get the hell out of here!" Cortana answered. They were together, somewhere close but the crumbling area around the super-soldier would make that a difficulty. The Didact's ship was making a space-time storm above them, sucking everything towards it.

The Chief looked around, next to the crashed Phantom dropship, there was an intact Covenant Shadow troop transport vehicle. He hadn't seen those in years. The Chief ran towards and pushed the dead drive off the controlling seat of the vehicle. He got on.

"Give me a second to take control ofâ€¦" Cortana was about to say.

"No time." The Chief responded as he turned the troop transport on. He took it out of the rubble and made his way to were the Avatar and her companions where.

"Ughâ€¦what happened?" Bolin asked as he woke up. "I had the weirdest dream, that we were following this armored guy in a journey deep within the world, fighting monsters with light swords and that shooted light balls, and then we awoke this rather powerful nose-less guy from sleep."

"Bolin that happened, we were knocked out." Asami responded.

"Oh." Bolin said. "Hey look!"

They all looked up as the whole core was being destroyed by the Didact as he left the center of 'Requiem'. "That's not good." Korra

said.

"Where's the Star-Lord?" Mako asked as he looked around, they were surrounded by the bodies of dead Covenant soldiers.

Then a rather big purple vehicle tore through the rocks. "Get in, now." The Master Chief ordered, rather calm for the chaos happening around him.

"Right." Korra said as they all jumped inside the Shadow troop transport. "We're in!"

The Master Chief nodded, he then drove into the waypoint Cortana made that marked the nearest active portal. As they went on, the canyon was beginning to collapse. The rockwalls were falling behind them as the ground shook. "I'm going to use your shield generator to amplify the Shadow's speed boost." Cortana said.

"Do it." The Chief replied. His shields flicked as the boosting ability of the Covenant vehicle went over drive. The Master Chief did all he could to avoid falling hazards and holed in the ground. Korra and the others watched the still living Covenant troops running for their lives trying to escape the destruction but were crushed by rocks or plummeted to their doom.

"The core's not going to last much longer!" Cortana yelled.

Magma and rocks jumped from the ground as the boulders of metal fell over their heads. The Chief kept going on, running through rock walls and obstacles.

"Portal! Up ahead!" Cortana said as the portal could be seen ahead. The Chief stomped on the acceleration pedal and went full throttle.

"Ahhh!" The Avatar and her companions screamed as the Shadow went over the precipice and towards the fading portal.

* * *

><p>Shield World

The Shadow went through and appeared into a world that looked similar to that was on the surface. But the skies were limited by a ceilingâ€¦

The Shadow wasn't stopping for nothing, the Chief tried to put on the brakes but they were going too fast and were heading towards a cliff. The Chief thought fast and pressed a button that separated the transport cargo and the driver's seat.

That way he saved the Avatar and her friends. He looked towards the coming cliff. "Whoa there cowboy!" Cortana said loudly as the Chief swiftly moved the driver cockpit to the left, and jumped out by propelling himself off. He landed on his feet as the vehicle fell into the foggy bottom of the precipice.

"Chief look!" Cortana said. As the SPARTAN was joined by Korra and the rest, a gigantic ship broke through the clouds, entering through the opened gate of the shield world.

"Wowâ€¦" Mako said as he gazed upon the finest space ship created by human hands, the UNSC Infinity as it descended down.

"Mayday! Mayday! This is the captain of the UNSC Infinity! Unknown entity has seized control of our ship! We're without power, and on a collision course with an unidentified Forerunner planet!" The voice of the captain was heard through the Chief's radio.

"It's going down!" Asami said. The Infinity was falling slowly into the jungle valley beyond.

"Track it's descend." The Chief said.

"Marking: Impact predicted 77.8 kilometers due north." Cortana responded.

Then the massive structure satellite, The Didact's Cryptum hovered up behind the Chief and his young companions. "By the Spirits!" Bolin yelled as the round ship, hovered in front of them.

"Its the Ancient!" Korra yelled. The ship then scanned them, and flew towards the Infinity.

"He's goingâ€¦" Mako said as the ship left.

"Same place we are." The Master Chief interrupted as he began to walk towards the crash site of the UNSC Infinity.

7. Combat Evolved

UNSC Infinity

* * *

><p>The bridge was in chaos, officers and crewmen rush from post to post, trying to bring the behemoth of a ship that the Infinity is back online.<p>

"Sir, we lost contact with the ODSTs we dropped before we entered the shield world. The surface has gone dark!" An officer informed.

"I want an analysis done on the FTL drives and back-up generators! Why the hell aren't they responding?!" Captain Del Rio demanded as he looked at the holographic map in front of him.

"Commander Lasky." The captain said.

"Yes sir?" Thomas Lasky asked.

"Notify Commander Palmer and Castle Team, you are going out to explore what the hell the condition outside is. I don't want any surprises." Del Rio ordered.

"Right away sir." Lasky saluted and then he walked away from the bridge. Captain Del Rio turned around and walked towards the command window, from there he saw treesâ€¦thousands of trees, a jungle. Where have they crashed into?

"Sir, Commander Lasky, a group of SPARTANs and two Marine squads have left to their recon mission." An officer said.

"Good." Del Rio responded.

"We got something sir. Outside the main batteries, a vessel of unknown origin is scanning the ship and its being followed by several Covenant Storm CRS-class battlecruisers." Another crewman informed.

"Hellâ€¦" Del Rio said.

* * *

><p>Jungle, Inside the Shield Worldâ€¦twenty minutes later

The Master Chief, the Avatar and her companions walked through the jungle, going over rocks and ducking under branches. The hike they took was a long one until the Chief suddenly stopped. Korra and the rest crouched when the Master Chief did.

"Stay low; recon sortie heading this way." Cortana informed.

"We're near the crash site." The super-soldier informed Korra and the rest. The Master Chief walked slowly towards a clearing that allowed him to see the crashed UNSC ship and the Didact's Cryptum floating next to it. Covenant Storm support troops flew over them, towards the ship.

"The ship looks intact." Cortana said.

"Something tells me that's only because the Didact wanted it that way." The Master Chief responded, seeing how the Didact hadn't reduced the gargantuan human space ship into nothing more than ashes.

Korra saw how the Star-Lord communicated with the Spirit, talking about the crashed Star-Lord ship and the Ancient not destroying it. This ancient, the Didact, seemed to not like the Star-Lords at all.

"This is Lasky to UNSC Infinity. We're up to our necks in bad guys down here. Does anyone read?" A familiar voice sounded through the comm channels.

"This is Sierra 117 of the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn. We're on station, ready to assist." The Master Chief replied to the commander, acknowledging his call.

"Negative copy, sounded like you said 'Forward Unto Dawn'? Come againâ€¦" Lasky said before his voice was cut out.

"Signal's bouncing in and out; I can't clean it up." Cortana explained the interference.

"Light up their friend-or-foe tags; we're gonna need something to zero in on." The Master Chief said as he stood up firmly looking at the Cryptum scanning the UNSC ship.

The SPARTAN turned to look at his companions, the kids looked around wondering their surroundings, and he shook his head in an 'I can't believe I have to carry them along'. The only one seemed to be more focused was the girl that made first contact with him, the Avatar.

"Avatar, take this." The Chief said as he threw his M6H Magnum to the surprised Korra who catch it by the grip. "You'll need it if we split up in the jungle."

"T-Thanks." Korra said feeling honored that the Star-Lord had given her one of his holy weapons. Asami peeked over her shoulder to see the pistol.

"That's amazingâ€¦look at the craftsmanship of the weapon." Asami said in awe.

"We should go before any of the Beasts catches up with us." Mako said, when they turned to look at the Star-Lord, he had vanished. They saw his movement through the plants that led towards the dense jungle and they followed.

The Master Chief walked cautiously aiming his Assault Rifle in all directions before moving in a small jog and taking cover behind a tree. He lookedâ€¦ nothing, no movement or sleeping Grunts anywhere. Where is the Covenant?

The others got to where he was. "Chief, I got a scan of a friendly tag somewhere close by." Cortana said.

"Mark a NavPoint." The Chief responded and almost instantaneously an arrow appeared in his Head-Up Display signaling the location of the friendly tag. "We got a friendly."

"Finally, another Star-Lord we can talk to." Mako said.

"Be ready, he might be totally different from the Master Chief." Asami warned.

"Yeah, keep it cool." Korra added.

"Hehâ€¦cool." Bolin remarked as the followed the towering SPARTAN.

As they went on through the dense and green jungle, they heard what it sounded like screams. Of bones being cracked and guts being sliced. Once he heard this with his super-human hearing, the Master Chie rushed towards the screams in lightning speed, a blur to the eyes of Korra and the others.

As the Master Chief ran towards the falling IFF tag, a Promethean Crawler ambushed him. The metallic Forerunner dog tried bite Chief's visor, but the SPARTAN lifted the smaller defense AI and crushed it with his might. But once he killed the Crawler, dozens more seemed to replace it as they came out from the surrounding brushes and trees.

"They are coming out of the woodwork! Chief watch out!" Cortana warned the SPARTAN as he quickly saw his motion tracker and rolled out of the way. A Promethean Knight struck the grassy ground with his

hard-light axe; it tried to get the Master Chief from the back. It roared as it took its axe out of the ground, revealing it's glowing orange human skull beneath its death mask.

The Master Chief began shooting the Crawlers that had assembled and were now aiding the Knight against the SPARTAN. Chief seemed to be out-numbered, his Assault Rifle not doing enough damaged to the Knight as multiple Crawlers jumped in the way.

The Knight then fired its weapon; a hard-light shot struck the Master Chief, making his energy shields glow. Thinking fast, the Master Chief took out a plasma grenade, obtained from an Elite's corpse, activated it and threw it at the Knight. But instead of sticking on its armor plating, a small bean grabbed it and threw back to him.

The plasma grenade exploded, taking out some Crawlers in the process. The Chief looked, one of those 'Watchers' appeared behind the Knight. That meant that grenades were useless until he took care of the flying defense AI.

The others arrived in time, once they saw the Knight and the flying Watcher behind it, giving it support, they fired. Korra didn't know how to work the pistol so when she tried to fire, nothing came out. Mako shot lightning at the Knight, while Bolin threw small boulders at the Watcher. Asami looked around for something useful and found on the ground a weapon of the Ancients. She grabbed it, and as if she knew about her whole life began to fire at the Knight with a hail of hard-light bullets.

"Hold on, how in the Spirits' names do you know how to work that thing!?" Korra yelled, asking Asami how she could control that ancient gun and she didn't know how to use this simpler pistol.

"I don't know, once a grabbed it I knew how to shoot it." Asami responded.

"Safety's on." The Master Chief said as he came out of cover and unleashed hell on the Promethean Knight by throwing a fragmentation grenade at it since the Watcher was too busy with Bolin throwing rocks at it.

"What?!" Korra asked.

"The little switch on the side of the handle, move it down." The Chief responded.

Korra looked down at the gun, there it was! She couldn't understand the writing on it, but she moved the switched down and heard a little release coming from within the weapon. Now she could fire it and make the Star-Lord proud.

The Promethean Knight's shields were down once one of Mako's lightning bolts got right on the chest, in all of its fury, the Knight roared highly while revealing its glowing skull. Korra aimed down, having seen Metalbending cops using guns similar to this one, and shot at the Promethean's skull. The recoil made Korra fall on her back while the 12.7x40mm bullet flew through the air and struck in target.

The Knight screamed in pain as its metal body fell on the floor and began to vanish. The Chief ended the Watcher as he shot at it as it fled. Mako and Bolin helped Korra up, her arm hurt a bit. "Howâ€¦how do you resist the recoil from that thing?" Korra asked Asami as she held the Forerunner weapon with on hand.

"It's light, as if accustomed itself to my biology. I don't feel a thing when I fire it." Asami explained as she looked at the weapon on her hand, it was as majestic as it was deadly. "I'll call these weapons, Supressors, since they suppress recoil."

"Good job." Master Chief said as he joined the group. "All of you."

They smiled at the Master Chief whose helmet and visor hid his face but they thought that beneath it a god was smiling to them too. "They need our help." The Chief said as he focuses on the mission once more.

The nodded and followed. Once they arrive on the battlescene, they saw multiple dead bodies. The Covenant had been here alright, but they had been killed.

"What happened here? Where are the Star-Lords?" Korra asked the Chief as he walked towards a body hidden beneath the tall grass.

"IFF tag confirmed." Cortana said. "The tag IDs him as Jimenez, Paolo J."

"Then Lasky's still out there somewhere." The Chief responded.

Korra and Mako approached the Chief and looked at the body beneath their feet. "It'sâ€¦its human." Korra said in disbelief.

It was a man, fully armored up, but his face was visible. He looked completely human; he looked like a Water Tribe man. "The Star-Lordsâ€¦they are human." Mako said upon the revelation.

The Master Chief looked around, seeing the traces of scorched earth. The Prometheans had made the jump on both parties and took them out as they fought. The Marines and the Covenant soldiers hadn't seen them coming. "I want answers." Korra yelled at the Master Chief as she furiously walked towards him. The SPARTAN stood back up, towering over the Avatar.

"You lied! You are no Star-Lord! We are fighting one of the Ancients because of you and these people's fault!" Korra yelled at the super-soldier who looked at her quietly.

"You're right, I am no god." The Master Chief responded after what seemed to be an eternity, Asami and Bolin walked towards them after hearing what Korra said. "But the Didact isn't either."

"What are you talking about!? Haven't you seen what he can do!?" Korra yelled again.

"Yes we have." Cortana said through the Chief's speakers. "What you've been told for centuries has just been mythology, these Star-Lords are actually very much human like you and the Chief hereâ€¦well more like you."

"Mythology!?" Mako yelled too in anger. "Now you question our believes, what's next? You are going to tell us that the Spirits are fake too when we have the Avatar here to proof their existence!?"

"We will talk about this later, but right now screaming won't get us anywhere while the Prometheans are hunting us." The Master Chief said to deaf ears. "If we don't stop the Didact now, here, he is going to kill everyone outside."

"Okay." Korra said as she tried to calm herself. "When we get to that 'space' ship of yours, we will talk about this." She knew better, she couldn't risk the safety of her world and her people. She was the Avatar after all.

The Master Chief nodded. "Gather any weapons and ammo you can take, there are going to be more Prometheans on our way to the Infinity." He said as he reloaded his Assault Rifle.

8. United Nations Space Command

Jungle

* * *

><p>The Master Chief and his now conflicted teammates went through the dense jungle in a tense silence. The revelation that the Star-Lords were actually humans and not some kind of god-like beings made Korra and the rest question the old tales told ages ago by their ancestors. Should they question the Spirits now? Should Korra question her role now?<p>

The Master Chief then stopped, he then raised his arm up and made a fist, it meant stop. Something came up. "Covenant." He said as he readied his Assault Rifle and took cover behind a tree. The rest followed suit, readying their stolen Promethean guns.

"Har, yu barka crag." One of the Elites said as it commanded the Grunts to move faster. The Master Chief's translation module had been busted after the Battle of Installation 00 and his escape out of Halo as it blew up. "Garrrâ€¦" It said as it held an IFF tag in its hand.

"Lasky's squad must be close." Cortana said to the Chief. The super-soldier nodded, and looked at the Avatar and her companions. He moved two of his fingers in a forward direction, Korra at first didn't understand what he meant but when she saw at what he was pointing at it became a little clearer.

She nodded in acknowledgement. The Chief then made a fist, which meantâ€¦attack. She quickly turned to her friends. "Guys, we are going to attack the Beasts in the clearing ahead." She informed.

"They won't see us coming." Mako said as he prepared the Lightrifle in his hands. They all then stood up and fired at the Covenant Storm squadron, taking them by surprise and allowing the Master Chief an opportunity to tag the leading red armored Elite with his rifle. The

Elite's shields held, but they were being severely damaged by the fire of the hardlight guns.

The Grunts were quickly taken down, while the Jackal in the squadron raised it plasma shield up, covering itself from the barrage of light bullets. "Bolin, shoot it at its feet!" Mako told his brother, he nodded and fired away, getting the bird-like alien in the talons.

The Jackal screamed in pain and lowered its shield, giving Korra an opening and shot the Jackal in the head with her Magnum. The alien fell on the grass ground, only the red Elite remained.

The Master Chief, seeing that most of the Covenant soldiers were mowed down, quickly came out of cover and ran towards where the Elite was hiding at. Knowing that this would close-combat he took out his combat knife and stabbed the Elite in the neck before it even reacted. The SPARTAN assassinated the big alien officer and let it fall on the ground.

"Promethean signals getting close." Cortana informed. "We better keep heading towards the last IFF point before we become Promethean dinner."

"Understood." The Chief replied. "Let's keep going towards the last IFF tag signal."

"We better get an explanation once we get there." Korra said in an irritated voice as the followed the Master Chief.

After some minutes of walking they arrived on a closed Forerunner gate, several UNSC crates could be seen around the area. The Master Chief noticed a nearby DMR lying on top of one of the weapon crates. He hadn't seen one in years, he took it to replace the Magnum he gave Korra.

"More weapons." Asami said as she picked up a nearby grenade.

"Don't pull the pin." The Chief warned.

"Why?" Asami asked.

"If you do, half of your body would be turned into a fleshy mess." The Chief responded in a dull voice.

"Oh." Asami said as she placed the grenade back on top of the green cylindrical crate. Sandbags had been placed around as well, in haste as it could be seen. The marines hadn't been enough time to prepare before the Prometheans arrived.

"Chief! Multiple IDs! Behind the gate, they are friendly!" Cortana informed the Master Chief.

The gate opened, taking Korra and her friends by surprise. They turned to see if the Chief opened it but they were met with several armored men walking out of the gate. Wearing different kinds of armors, similar yet vastly different from the Master Chief's. They didn't know what to do, but they drop their weapons on the ground as soon as one of the apparent 'Star-Lords' walked towards them.

"Afraid we're gonna have to give you an IOU on that welcome home party." A shorter uniformed man said as he casually walked out of the structure. "Tom Lasky, First Officer of the UNSC Infinity. Never though I'll see you again." He said as he shook hands with old SPARTAN-II.

Lasky looked at the kids being escorted inside by two SPARTAN-IVs. "Still leading kids I see?" Lasky asked in casual tone.

"They covered my flank." The Chief responded.

"Seal her up!" Another SPARTAN ordered, a woman inside a white MJOLNIR suit without helmet, said as she walked towards them. She looked at the Master Chiefâ€¦ "Thought you'd be taller." She teased once she got a full look of the Chief; even so he was much taller.

"â€¦ground forces are ordered to return to Infinity immediately." The captain's voice could be heard from a nearby radio.

"Commander! Radio's hot!" The communications marine said.

They entered the structure, the other SPARTANs sealing it completely. They formed around the marine and listened to the radio. "â€¦respond to commâ€¦" The captain sounded irritated.

"On what frequency?" The captain asked. "What frequency dammit!"

"Infinity, this is Commander Lasky. Pelican recon teams are down. Repeat. All birds are down. We've got numerous casualties and require immediate assistance. Over." Lasky reported to the captain.

"Finallyâ€¦did you get the coordinates to that gravity well?" The captain asked.

"Affirmative, Sir. But we're going to need a bus out of here." Lasky responded, putting his men above the mission.

"Make it happen." The captain ordered, cutting communications.

"You were sent on a scouting run in the middle of an attack on the ship. " Cortana said, noticing the faulty orders.

"The Captain thought Infinity could provide us cover and hold off an attack at the same time." Lasky explained.

"Sir, we'll never get the wounded back to the ship on foot." The commanding Spartan, Commander Sarah Palmer, said.

Lasky began to think until a realization came to him. They now had the Master Chief, the legendary soldier who destroyed Halo twice, ended the Human-Covenant War and saved he galaxy, with them now. "I don't know if it's too soon to ask you for a favor but we're going to run out of breathing room here real quick." He said as he stood up. "I don't suppose you're any good at clearing LZs? "

"On occasion." The Chief responded. "I'll send out an all clear once

the area's secured."

Korra and her friends were being led to what it appeared to be an airship, but it looked more like a bird than a flying vehicle. "Whoaâ€¦that's your flying machine?" Asami asked the SPARTAN IV scouting them.

"Affirmative, this is a Pelican Dropship. This colony is really backwards isn't it?" The SPARTAN asked.

"Colony?" Bolin asked.

"Who are these people?" A marine asked the SPARTAN IV as they came up the ramp of the dropship.

"They were with the Master Chief; take them to the Infinity for safety. I think that the commander and captain will like to talk to them." The Spartan informed the pilot.

"Not without a clear air space I am not." The pilot said. "Wait did you just say the Master Chief?"

"Yes I did." The Spartan confirmed as he directed Korra and the rest to their seats.

"Why are we going with them?" Mako whispered to Korra.

"It's the only safe place we can go, and we can get answers there." Korra whispered back, Mako understood.

The Master Chief exited the structure, going towards the LZ that Lasky had told him where the Pelicans could enter to pick up the wounded and escort the Pelicans that were still operational out of the hot zone.

A squad of Marines was waiting for him, with a more experienced group of soldiers; the Master Chief was able to mow down several Promethean Knights as he continued on towards the LZ. He arrived towards another gate.

"The Marines got trapped trying to get through these doors. Look for an interface." Cortana said. "These doors open to cave system with a space large enough for an LZ."

The Chief placed Cortana inside the panel so she could open the doors for them. "This is going to take a while, hold off the Prometheans while I try to open these doors." Cortana informed.

The Master Chief then ordered the surviving Marines to prep up for any attacks, manning the machine gun turrets around and reloading their rifles. A wise order since the Prometheans came back at full force; about four Knights came leading dozens of Crawlers and several Watchers. This was going to be tough but the UNSC Marines had the higher ground.

"Cortana? How close are we?" The Chief asked.

"I-I 'll dooo my job and yooouuu do yoursss aokay?" Cortana said in an aggressive tone, sounding more digital again. Rampancy was kicking in. "Gates ready, come and get me." Cortana sounded normal

again.

The Chief went back to the interface, and retrieved Cortana from it. The doors opened, revealing the cave system. The Master Chief went inside, leading the surviving Marines to clear the LZ.

"I'm sorry about back there." Cortana apologized for her rampant outburst. "That hatch's security was more difficult than I expected."

"It's all right." The Chief said, trying to keep her calm.

"It's not all right. Nothing about it's all right." Cortana said.

Once The Master Chief arrived by the end of the tunnel he noticed a Promethean Knight standing at the end of it. "Knight! Waitâ€¦what's he doing?" Cortana asked as they both looked at the Knight giving commands.

"Covenant?" The Master Chief asked.

"They're working with the Prometheans?" Cortana asked rhetorically, something was going on.

The Chief nevertheless attacked both parties, shot the Grunts in the head with his DMR, bring all of them down efficiently. The Knight teleported away, not wanting a head on fight with the Chief just yet. It ordered the Jackals to shoot at the SPARTAN from long-range.

As he took cover behind a nearby tree, the Chief noticed a new type of UNSC weapon he had never seen before. He picked it up; his Heads-Up Display informed him that it was a Railgun. This would come in handy.

Thinking strategically, it would be more effective to kill the Promethean Knight giving out the orders to the Covenant Jackals. He looked at the Knight; it was still giving out orders. With his fast reflexes he ran out of cover and aimed at the Knight with his Railgun. It took four seconds to prime and fire, but it all felt like milliseconds for the Master Chief.

The Promethean Knight exploded into pieces as the round of the Railgun ripped it apart with its fast speed. The Jackals kept firing at the Chief, but without a leader they didn't know what to do, they couldn't flank the SPARTAN.

With his DMR, he countered the Jackals and took them out each with four bullets to the brain, four shots, and four kills. As soon as the last Jackal fell down on the ground dead, a Covenant Phantom dropship arrived with more foot soldiers. This time accompanied by two Elites and another Knight.

The super-soldier loaded his Railgun, and prepared for the battle. He was joined by the other Marines who he had told to stay put as he took care of the Knight, but it looked like they were eager to aid the Master Chief in combat.

Meanwhile, Korra, Mako, Bolin and Asami were bored out of their minds as they waited for the all clear. They just sat inside the damaged

Pelican, looking around but not being able to step outside without the SPARTAN IV telling them that its 'too dangerous'. They had already taken down many Promethean soldiers; they can take care of themselves.

"Soâ€¦you're aâ€¦" Mako said, trying to start a conversation with the pilot who was looking at some files.

"I'm a UNSC Marine Corps pilot." He responded.

"Ohâ€¦what's the UNSC?" Mako asked.

"And what's a marine?" Bolin added.

"Seriously?" The SPARTAN IV asked them, not believing that they didn't have some kind of Marine Corps.

"Our military has a navy and army but we've never heard of a marine corps." Asami explained.

"Well since this isn't really some kind of classified informationâ€¦the UNSC stand for the United Nations Space Command. We are a military organization from the Unified Earth Government. We are their military, science and research branch." The pilot told them.

"Unified Earth Government? Is that where you come from?" Korra asked.

"Yeah, we all, even if we were born in different planets, we all originate from planet Earth. Our homeworld." The Spartan IV answered. "But something tells me you don't."

"How does Earth look like?" Asami asked.

"It has blue skies, blue oceans, clear air, great cities, etc. I couldn't think of a better home." The pilot answered, clearly showing that he was born and raised on Earth. "Actually, it kinda looks like the surface of this planet but with more continents."

"Are there nations on Earth?" Korra asked, wondering if they too had an Avatar.

"There are 196 countries On Earth, each independent but ultimately united under the Unified Earth Government." The Spartan IV answered.

Wowâ€¦196 nations, Korra's world only had five. "Does someone represent all of the nations?" Korra asked again.

"Politically it's the chairman of the UEG, militaristic it's Fleet Admiral Lord Hood." The pilot responded.

"Spiritually?" Korra asked once more, curiosity getting the better of her.

"Spiritually? Kid, we are well beyond those kinds of things." The Spartan IV responded as he smirked and crossed his arms.

"Don't listen to him; we don't really have that type of leadership.

Sure most of us believe in some kind of higher force but we've learn to separate religion and state." The pilot explained. "We just believe in whatever we want, even in ourselves."

Korra thought about this deeply, maybe these 'Star-Lords' weren't so bad after all. But that didn't explain why the old text made them such a big deal, they were as human as she was. But they hadn't bended at all since she saw them, the Master Chief relied on guns and on his brute strength.

"Are you able toâ€¦bend?" Korra asked them both.

"Bend? Like metal, yeah I can bend metal with my hands." The Spartan IV said as he took a nearby assault rifle and easily ripped it in two.

"No, not that type of bending objects, but bending the elements." Korra explained.

"Bending the elements?" The pilot asked.

"Like this." Mako said as he made a small flame come out of his finger tip.

"What the?" The Spartan IV said as he took a closer look. "Did you just make fire without some kind of mechanical help?"

"Uh-huh." Mako responded as he created a big flame on top of his palm.

"Amazingâ€¦you have super-powers." The pilot said.

"This is common in most of our people; we can all bend except for Asami." Mako said.

"Eh." Asami shrugged.

"And Korra can bend all four main elements like: fire, earth, water and recently air." Bolin informed. "She's the Avatar."

"The what?" The Spartan IV asked.

"The Avatar, the spiritual bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds, able to bend the four elements at will." Bolin answered.

"Bridge betweenâ€¦two worlds?" The pilot asked as he thought. "Hmmâ€¦"

"What is it?" The Spartan IV asked the pilot.

"The captain will really want to see them, they are not normal humans." The pilot said. "I just hope that the captain doesn't tell the spooks about them."

"Yeah, I hate the spooks." The Spartan IV agreed.

"Spooks." Korra asked.

"Don't worry about those eggheads for now; you will have a long talk

with Captain Del Rio and Commander Lasky once we get to the Infinity." The Spartan IV told her.

9. Intermission

Caves, Jungle

* * *

><p>The cave system was a battered battlefield, the fight had lasted more than was thought. The Covenant Storm had been pouring troops to kill the SPARTAN-II and his squad of UNSC Marines. But with enough firepower, they had been dealt with efficiently.<p>

"Cortana to Lasky, LZ is secure. " Cortana informed through the comm channels.

"Copy that Cortana, I'll send in the coordinates." Lasky responded.

"MAYDAY! MAYDAY! CODE RED! HOSTILE ELMENTS INTENTING TO GAIN ENTRANCE TO THE INFINITY BRIDGE!" The voice of a marine ripped through their conversation. "We're outside the hatch! Door's breach! Door's breach!"

The sounds of plasma hitting and melting metal could be heard through the channels. "All units return to the Infinity immediately! That's an order!" Commander Lasky ordered to the remaining units still outside the ship. "Chief, I'm retracting the SPARTAN-IV forces to rally point Alpha Sierra Foxtrot. Do what you can; you are in tactical command of the force. Rendezvous with those men and get back to the ship!"

"Yes sir." The Chief acknowledge.

"Good luck Chief. Lasky out." Lasky then ended communications. A pelican dropship then arrived to pick the Master Chief and the remaining Marines up.

"What about Korra and the others?" Cortana asked the super-soldier.

"They're in safe hands." The Master Chief responded as he got inside the dropship. "They won't be alone."

Meanwhile in the dropship that Korra and company where waiting in.

"Just got word, commander is ordering all SPARTAN units to fall back to rally point Alpha Sierra Foxtrot." The SPARTAN-IV informed them.

"That far back?" The pilot asked.

"Also, the Covenant forces have been dealt with, air space secured." The Spartan informed again. "Looks like you are going in to safety." He said as to the teenagers.

"We would like some answers when we get there." Korra said.

"Talk with any of the officers when you get to the Infinity, I have to hitch a ride to the rally point and meet up with the others." The Spartan said as he jumped out of the Pelican.

"Wait, you never told us your name." Asami said.

"Name's Tom." The Spartan said as he smirked and placed his helmet back on. "Cortez, take them back to the Infinity."

"Will do." The pilot said as he stepped back into the cockpit. The dropship began to hover into the air; Asami looked down at the Spartan who began to jog into the caves. She was intrigued by this Star-Lordâ€¦or rather Spartan.

"Alright, once we get to their ship we will head right into the Captain's office and lay it on him." Korra said.

"You sure they'll let us walk right into their boss's room?" Bolin asked.

"If they don't we can take themâ€¦right?" Mako added.

"Let's just not get on their bad said okay?" Asami responded. The pelican flew through the skies, following the other pelican dropships that were evacuating wounded and scientists.

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity

The pelican landed inside one of the secured pelican bays. "We're here, safe and sound." Cortez said as he the pelican's engines turned off.

"This...is the Infinity?" Korra asked in awe as they stepped out of the pelican. The docking bay was immense, easily bigger than any throne room on Korra's world. She saw many people around, soldiers running to their dropships, staff maintaining the bay and beeping sounds coming from several devices.

"Are these the people that the Chief was protecting, staff sergeant?" A voice sounded through the Cortez's comms.

"Yes sir." Cortez responded.

"Send them to the bridge ASAP." The captain ordered.

"Aye aye." Cortez acknowledge. "Skipper seems jumpy, follow me to the bridge."

"That was easy." Bolin said as they followed Staff Sergeant Cortez out of the docking bay.

"Just stay cool when we meet their captain, we don't know what he'll ask us." Korra said.

"Noted." Mako said.

In the bridge of the Infinity, Captain Andrew Del Rio was

communicating with the on-world forces who had managed to contact the Infinity. "Gunnery Sergeant, tell me your position!" Del Rio said in a loud and commanding voice.

"Too many Covenantâ€¦.*static*â€¦.we barely made it out of the city council chamberâ€¦*static*â€¦.we are on a city called...*static*â€¦.Republican City?" The gunny responded. "Republic City, roger."

"Send me the coordinates." Del Rio said.

"Ourâ€¦*static*â€¦specialist was shot down half a click from ourâ€¦.*static*â€¦.position. Equipment blasted off too." The gunny responded.

"Damnâ€¦reunite all ground side forces and any local militia you can find, I need you alive gunnery sergeant." Del Rio said.

"Yes sir, Gunnery Sergeant Buck out." The signal then ended. Del Rio then rubbed the sides of his forehead and then activated his personal comm channels. "Commander Lasky, where the hell are you?"

"Just got out of my pelican sir, I'm heading to the bridge." Lasky answered.

"Okay." Del Rio said as he turned the comm off.

"Sir!" Cortez said as he entered the bridge and took stance.

"At ease." Del Rio said and Cortez relaxed.

"These are the people." Cortez said as he showed the captain the teens saved from the jungle.

"Teenagers? These are the people that the Master Chief risked his neck to protect?" Del Rio asked, sounding not too pleased.

"Sir, these individuals are unique among their people. Especially this one, sir." Cortez informed as he pointed towards Korra.

"Uniqueâ€¦unique? I'm fighting a goddamn united armada of Covenant troops and rogue AIs and their commander at the same time and you're telling me that these nine year olds can save us from this?!" Del Rio yelled at the pilot.

"Whoa thereâ€¦he's right." Korra stepped in. "We natives of this world."

"Okayâ€¦" Del Rio tried to calm down, he was extremely frustrated with the situation they were right now. "â€¦who are you and what the hell is going on?

"My name is Korra and I'm the Avatar of this world." Korra introduced herself. "And these are my friends."

"Our world was attacked by the beasts you called the Covenant, and we were trying to evacuate the cities." Mako added. "That's when Korra found the Chief."

"What happened?" Del Rio asked.

"I'm not sure but it looked like the skies were falling and that the Chief fell from the sky along with his ship and crashed down into the cityâ€¦my city." Korra answered. "When we followed the Chief in hereâ€¦into the center of the planet we accidently unleashed somethingâ€¦"

"Unleashed what?" Del Rio asked again.

"We unleashed the Didact." Asami answered. "An Ancient." As she finished saying that, Lasky stepped inside the bridge.

"I'm here captain." Lasky said as he saluted the captain.

"Commander, how are the main batteries?" Del Rio asked his first officer.

"Still off-line, but the Master Chief has already paved the way into the Infinity and is awaiting orders sir." Lasky informed.

"Good, I will contact him. Take any info you can from them." Del Rio said as he turned around and walked towards his command chair.

"He's a charming dude." Korra said as she crossed her arms.

"Oh you met the captain." Lasky said as he looked at Korra. "I'm Commander Thomas Lasky, second-in-command of this ship."

"I'm Korra." She shook his hand.

"Good to see that not everyone is losing a nerve in here." Bolin said. Lasky looked at Cortez and nodded, telling him that he could return to this pelican now. Cortez saluted him and walked off from the bridge.

"You'll have to forgive the captain for hisâ€¦renegade personality; we are all in a tight situation right now." Lasky said as he waved his hand in a follow me motion. The others then followed him away from the bridge and into the living quarters.

"Listenâ€¦uhâ€¦Commander, we want to know exactly the situation with these Covenant and your people, you guys are as human as we are butâ€¦why do you come from the stars?" Korra asked Lasky as they walked down the metal corridors of the Infinity. "I mean, look at this place, it's something out of legendâ€¦legends that we used to believe."

"To tell you the truth, I have no idea either." Lasky truthfully answered. "Sit down and relax a bit."

"Relax? How can we when our world is being ravaged outsideâ€¦I mean up there." Mako said, a little anger coming out of his voice.

"We already sent troopers to secure several cities, all we can do now is wait until the Chief and the SPARTANs bring power to main batteries and we can drive the Covenant ships off." Lasky said as he

too sat down and rubbed his eyes.

"I take it you are also tired like the rest?" Asami asked the Commander.

"Yeahâ€¦my life is full of surprises. The Chief told me about you guys as he cleared the cave from hostiles, real calm under fire and what he didn't tell me, Cortana sent to my arm-tool." Lasky said.

"Did he tell you about our abilities and my status in world?" Korra asked Lasky.

"That he did. I just can't wrap my mind around spirits and out-wordly places that only the Avatar, you, have access." Lasky said. "When I was your age, I almost diedâ€¦twice. But I never had so much weight on my shoulders like you do."

"I learned how to balance my tasks through timeâ€¦I have a good teacher and good friends too." Korra said.

Lasky smiled as he saw how connected these kids were to each other, like he was with his squad back in Academy. "Okay, I'm heading back to the bridge and keep the captain from losing any more hair. Make yourselves cozyâ€¦well, try to ignore all the chaos going on outside for now. I'll call you once we get the engines working again." He said to them, he smiled and left, the door closing by itself after he left the small room.

"Any ideas how to pass the time?" Mako asked them as he looked out from a nearby window.

"I'm still worried, we can't just sit here." Asami said.

"I knowâ€¦Tenzin always said to meditate through hard situations like these." Korra said as she sat in an Air-Nomad fashion and relaxed her mind and body.

"Wellâ€¦they have books." Bolin said as he grabbed one from a nearby shelf.

"Bolin, we can't read their books." Mako said.

"Oh." Bolin said as he placed the book back inside the shelf.

10. Briefing

Republic City

* * *

><p>"Move." An ODST said as his team and he moved through a battered city hall. He moved his fingers signaling towards the building's entrance. The other ODST nodded, he placed a C5 charge and then took cover.<p>

The giant wooden door then came down, allowing the Special Forces ODSTs to enter; they quickly swiped the area for any hostiles. "Clear." One of them said, they lowered their M7/Caseless SMGs and

looked for any survivors.

"Hey Gunny, look." An ODST said as he pointed to a dead Elite's body. "No bullet wounds or anything."

"Hmmâ€¦" The gunnery sergeant mumbled. "Keep searching for survivors, we want those government officials alive."

"Understood." The ODST obeyed as he ran towards the nearest door. The gunnery sergeant kept looking around the council chamber.

"Reminds me of old American city halls back home." He said to himself, he then took a piece of paper over the table. "Looks like Chinese." He then heard a creak behind the council table; the gunnery sergeant then readied his SMG and slowly walked towards it.

He got close and then kicked the table, making whoever who was hiding below it jump out. "Whoa there, don't move, identify yourself."

"Don't shoot; I'm Councilman Tarrlok, representative of the Northern Water Tribe." The councilman replied.

"A government officialâ€¦good. I am Gunnery Sergeant Edward Buck of the UNSC Marine Corps, my team and I are here to get you to safety." Buck said as he offered Tarrlok a hand up.

"Thank you." Tarrlok said as he accepted the help and stood up. "Any word from the other council members?"

"Not at the moment, we are still looking." Buck responded as the other ODSTs came back.

"Nothing but dead bodies, sir." The ODST with the sniper rifle informed.

"Okay, let's escort Councilman Tarrlok here to the LZ and meet with the local military forces there." Buck ordered.

They walked out of the city hall building and headed towards the LZ. "If I may ask, I have never seen that kind of armor before. Are you and your teammates benders?" Tarrlok asked them.

"Benders? Please." The ODST with the rocket launcher responded.

"Settle down Mickey, no we are not that, we let our guns do the talking." Buck answered as he once more focused on the road ahead. Tarrlok's expression changed to one of mistrust as he followed the troopers to their destination.

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity

"She's still meditating?" Bolin asked as they all saw how Korra was deep into meditation after thirty minutes.

"Leave her alone; at least she's a little relaxed." Asami said.

"What must she be seeing in there? I mean in the Spirit World." Mako wondered. Was Korra truly speaking with Aang or was this whole belief of theirs false?

* * *

><p>"Aang!?" Korra yelled as she strolled by the grassy plains. "Anyone?!"<p>

She walked until something stopped her. A gigantic metallic pillar appeared in front of her, it was as futuristic as the ancient construct in the planet's core. She touched the pillar and felt a strange energy coming off it.

"_And so you enter, human._" A silky female voice was heard coming from the plains.

Korra felt a presence behind her; she quickly turned and saw Avatar Aang standing behind her. "Hello Korra, it looks like you have connected to your spiritual self."

"Yeahâ€¦about that, how? I'm not too good with this spiritual business." Korra replied as she looked at her past self.

"Being inside our world has helped you connect with us, Korra. You have come to me with questions right?" Aang asked her.

"Is thatâ€¦the legends of the Star-Lords and the Ancientsâ€¦things that we have believed to be facts are nowâ€¦false. I guess I just wanted to see you, to know that you were with all the time." Korra said as she crossed her arms and remembered what the Master Chief had told her.

"Korra, I'm always with you, me and your other past lives. The story of Star-Lords is not as false as you think them to be." Aang responded as he placed his hand over her shoulder. "You are the Avatar, the most powerful and wisest being on the world. Korra, even on these times of peril you will find a way."

Aang smiled at her, making her feel more secured. "One more thingâ€¦uh, who's the Didact?" She asked, receiving a stern look from Aang.

"The Didactâ€¦he is the Ancient God of War, Korra. You will have to stop him before he ends mankind." Aang answered her question.

* * *

><p>Korra then opened her eyes, she had returned to the Infinity, with the others looking at books or taking a nap. "Oh boyâ€¦"<p>

The Bridge, UNSC Infinity

"You called?" Korra asked as she entered the bridge. It had been a couple of hours after they had arrived and she had been called by Lasky to report to the bridge ASAP.

"Yeah Korra, we've repelled the satellite and the Covenant Storm

forces away from the Infinity and that the Master Chief is coming down from up top." Lasky answered as he placed his coffee mug on the holo-table. Then Commander Palmer entered the bridge, fully armored minus her helmet.

"What's the kid doing here?" The SPARTAN-IV asked.

"Hold on there, who are you calling a kid?" Korra responded as she stood in front of the taller, stronger super-soldier. Palmer was at least two feet taller than Korra , but she didn't care if she was facing a so called Star-Lord, no one would call her 'kid'.

"You better watch your tongue, squirt, or you'll miss it." Palmer threatened, gaining a grin from Korra.

"I am the Avatar, so you are the one who better watch it." Korra responded, the two female brawlers looked at each other while a frustrated Lasky pinched the tip of his nose.

"Could you two please stop this, you barely know each other so calm down." Lasky said trying to avoid a catastrophe in the deck.

Palmer smiled and walked away. "You got fire, I respect that." She said as she stood beside Lasky as he looked at the holo-table.

"Uhâ€¦thanks?" Korra said feeling a little confused about what just happened. The doors opened again, this time Captain Andrew Del Rio and the Master Chief walked through it. The Master Chief's armor had been scratched in some areas but he looked as if nothing had happened to him.

"What I want to know people is where the hell did those things come from?" Del Rio asked as the Chief inserted Cortana into the holo-table, making her avatar appear.

"Well, it's more than possible that they are native or whatever counts as native for a Forerunner AI, to this planet, Requiem." Cortana said as the hologram of a Forerunner Promethean appeared.

"We've never seen this type of offensive reaction from any other installations." Del Rio said as he looked at the Knight.

"Other installations?" Chief asked. Korra was listening to their conversation, not wanting to speak just yet.

"Mr. Lasky." Del Rio said.

"Infinity's mission was to locate the remaining Halo rings." Lasky said as he replaced the hologram of the Knight with that of a Halo ring. "And establish permanent bases to study them for decommission. We got location running over Installations 5 and 3, but lately they've been running into some setbacks."

"A science team got zapped excavating a Forerunner artifactâ€¦" Del Rio added as he made Forerunner symbols appear on the holo-table. "â€¦this sensor data is all that was left."

"Interestingâ€¦these symbols are a derivation of the Forerunner Glyph

system." Cortana said as she examined the symbols.

"And our geeks managed to pull some coordinatesâ€¦" Del Rio said as turned attention to Korra. "I'll give you three guesses where it led."

Korra wasn't amused by the Captain's little dry humor.

"Sir, Gypsy Company is prepare and ready to roll on your orders." Palmer informed the Captain as she gave him a data-pad. "Also, we have re-established contact with the surface, ODST team leaders report that the situation is improving as they recover more survivors."

"Good, thank you Palmer." Del Rion said as he began to look at the data-pad.

"Mr. Lasky, you take point, I want boots on the ground in sixty." Del Rio ordered his first officer as he handed the data-pad to him.

"Captainâ€¦" Master Chief said, feeling a little off about Del Rio's order.

"This is a first contact scenario, Master Chief. Priority is to free the Infinity from Requiem's gravity well and file a threat assessment to FLEETCOM." Del Rio responded, detailing his next move.

"You mean we're leaving?" Cortana asked.

"Sir, we can't leave these people here, they are defenseless against the Covenant and the Didact. We can't leave them to their own luck and we made the Didact retreat. He's vulnerable." The Master Chief said, not wanting to leave another planet to die.

"He isn't the only one. You know, out of all the people I thought that you would appreciate the benefit of living to fight another day." Del Rio responded as he walked away, leaving the bridge.

"Jeezâ€¦" Korra said as she walked towards the Chief and Cortana. "So, how you been?"

"About what happened in the jungle, it wasn't our intention to insult your culture." Cortana apologized.

"Don't worry about it; all we have to focus on now is how to stop the Didact." Korra said as she then looked at the Chief. "I would've never guessed that a man was inside that shell."

"Most people wouldn't." The Master Chief responded. "You better armor up, you and your friends are coming with me."

"What?" Korra asked.

"You heard the man." Cortana replied as she giggled at Korra's confusion. The Master Chief took Cortana's data chip out and put it inside his helmet.

"Yeah, I'll tell the others to ready up." Korra said as she ran

towards the room the others were in.

"Great kid, lots of responsibility from what Lasky told me." Palmer said as she stood beside the Chief. The Master Chief looked at her and nodded, he then walked out of the bridge and towards the armory.

* * *

><p>"Hey guys! We better prepare because we are going with the Chief in another mission!" Korra excitingly informed the others.<p>

"But we are not even trained to use any of these weapons." Bolin said as he dropped the book he was reading.

"Does it matter? It's just aiming and shooting, or we can just use our bending." Korra responded.

"I'll rather stick to my firebending." Mako replied.

"Me tooâ€¦well, earthbending." Bolin added.

"I'll take one." Asami said, getting a surprise look from the brothers. "What? I'm pretty good with them."

"Nice! Let's go to get armored up! I haven't wore an armor in years!" Korra yelled as she led Team Avatar to the armory.

11. The Lord of Admirals

**100,000 Years Agoâ€¦**

"_Tonight we've beaten our enemy, the greatest adversary of the Forerunnersâ€¦the Empire of Man._" The Didact said as he walked down accompanied by several of his Promethean guards.

He walked through the battered gate leading to the outside battlefield; the Didact was using his standard Promethean combat skin and a bright red cape showing his rank. As he came on the outside, several soldiers lined up on his presenceâ€¦

"_Lord of Admirals, it is an honor to finally meet you._" The Didact said as he faced his human equivalent, Forthencho. He was tall, robust, white markings adorned his tanned skin, his hair was thick and long and his armor showed his rankâ€¦and experience.

"Didact, you have accepted our unconditional surrender." Forthencho said as the human soldiers behind him tried not to shoot at the Promethean Knights protecting the Didact. "I expected an emissary."

"_For an event such as this, I was needed to be present. For more than millennia our species has been at war, at first we did not know whyâ€¦but we can see that you ran from the Parasite._" The Didact said.

"So you do understand the reasons of our retreat?" Forthencho said, hoping that the terms would be less severe.

"_Indeed, but that reason alone cannot justify a millennia of war and death, Lord of Admirals. Normally the penalty for such act would be complete annihilation of the aggressive race for it went against the Mantle. But you showed bravery, even for a human, you showed respect and courage, Lord of Admirals._" The Didact explained. "_For that I won't be sending your people to the maw of oblivion, but taking your technology away from you. You will be made to start over again, to think over the use of your toolsâ€¦the Librarian has made me reconsider my former opinion of you._"

"And the Parasite?" Forthencho asked.

"_We are Forerunners, guardians of all that exist. If the Parasite ever returns, we will be ready._" The Didact assured him as he extended his hand. "_Maybe someday we will meet again._"

"As Lord of Admirals, leader of the military forces of the empire of man and Avatar of humanity, I surrender to youâ€¦Didact. We were once a great race, united in power and concerted in our goalsâ€¦" The Lord Admirals said as he shook hands with the Forerunner. "â€¦I will see you in the Spirit World."

The both mighty leaders looked at each other, once sworn enemies were now considering a possible friendship in the afterlifeâ€¦

* * *

><p>100,000 Years Laterâ€¦Armory, UNSC Infinity_

"Look at this armor, its awesome!" Bolin said as he looked at the Marine BDU he wore. "And its painted with my favorite color, green!"

"Could you please calm down, it's just metal over your chest." Mako said as he looked at his armor, he didn't like it. Then he saw an armor set in a nearby storage locker. "I'll take this one."

"Mako, we don't know if that is someone's armor set." Asami said trying to be gentle with the items in the armory.

"Ah, what's the worst that could happen?" Mako replied as he took the helmet from the set.

"That's an ODST Body Dress Uniform, given only to the top tier within the Marine Corp. The Orbital Drop Shock Troopers." Cortana informed through the Master Chief's speakers as the SPARTAN checked his Assault Rifle.

"Will it matter if I take it?" Mako asked.

"Eh, just take it." Cortana responded.

"Awesome."

Korra was already armored up; she wore the standard Marine BDU with her arms exposed, showing her Water Tribe armband. "Asami I think that you should use one of those rifle things over here." She said as she took a DMR from the crate in front of her.

"I think I will stick with the magnum." Asami replied as she placed her handgun inside its holster.

"Everyone ready?" The Master Chief asked as he stood up. They all nodded. "Follow me to the Pelican."

As they sat inside their assigned Pelican, Korra was beginning to get headaches.

"Korra you okay?" Mako asked.

"Just a headache, I'll be fine." Korra replied, she looked at her hands. Her vision was blurredâ€¦she closed her eyes to calm down.

* * *

><p>Several ships exited slipspace, their location was a Forerunner colony world. Inside these ships, the elite of the Human Navy prepared to warn the planet of the immediate threat of the Parasite.<p>

"Lord of Admirals, we are position over the Forerunner planet." One of the bridge officers informed the young war lord. He had been recently completed his training as both leader of the armada and as Avatar, master of the elements.

"Show me." Forthencho said as a hologram of the world appeared in front of him.

"Population numbering above 2 Billion, Forerunner ships on alert and inbound." The officer informed.

"Is it possible that we have arrived ahead of it?" Forthencho asked his naval assistant.

"Flood infestation detected, my Lord."

"Dammit! "

"My Lordâ€¦the infestation is in a remote locale." The analyst said. "Perhaps if we warn the Forerunnersâ€¦"

"If we warn them we would be giving the Flood time to spread." Forthencho responded feeling immense pain and guilt for what he was about to do. "You know we have no choice."

He knew what would be the consequences of his actions but the risk for the infection to spread was too great. The galaxy needed balance, and as Avatar it was his duty to keep it balanced any way he could.

"Cleanse the planet."

And with it, the power of a thousand suns was unleashed on the planet below. Eradicating any and all lives that were on itâ€¦

* * *

><p>Korra then opened her eyes; they were still in the pelican. A minute had passed but it felt like hours. What had she just seen? It

appeared like it had been a past Avatarâ€¦but everything looked so far beyond her understanding, beyond what anything she has seen, even more than the UNSC itself.<p>

Maybe everything will be answered once they confront the Didactâ€¦

12. Rolling Thunder

**Inside UNSC Pelican Dropship, in route to the objectiveâ€¦**

* * *

><p>A hologram of the Infinity's captain, Andrew Del Rio, appeared. The Marines accompanying the Chief's team, which consisted of the Avatar and her friends, sat straight since the captain was technically on board.<p>

"Infinity to Gypsy Company." Del Rio said. "The air corridor to the gravity well is blocked by a network of particle cannons. Infinity's shields are still downâ€¦"

"Open a lane for us to move on and prove air support." Del Rio informed.

"Captain, what is Force Recon's assessment of the terrain?" The Master Chief asked.

"I know you've been off the field for a while Master Chief, but this is a blow-through operation, sending in recon would just slow us down." Del Rio responded, and then a hologram of one of the particle cannons appeared next to Del Rio's hologram, surprising Korra and her friends. "Telemetry indicates that the cannons are being controlled from a command post southwest of our position."

"Roll on that target, and neutralize those guns. We'll meet on the other side, and take the gravity well. Infinity out." Del Rio finished his speech and ended contact with the pelicans.

"I don't know about you but I usually like some intel with my intel." Cortana said as the Master Chief prepared and everyone inside the dropship stood up.

"We'll make it work." The Chief responded as the doors of the pelican opened revealing a rocky landscape.

As they stepped off the pelican, Korra looked around the area. Hearing a thunderous sound coming from just beyond the small cave structure ahead. "What's that sound?" Korra asked as they cleared the small cave and gazed upon the biggest land vehicle ever constructed by the UNSC.

"Master Chief, this is Sarah Palmer from Infinity CIC, Commander Lasky is waiting for you inside the Mammoth." The voice of the SPARTAN-IV was heard through the radio.

"On our way." The Chief replied.

"A Mammoth? That's what you guys call it? Bit of an understatement

don't you think?" Bolin asked as the group entered the enormous vehicle.

In it, several UNSC Marines operated the beast of a machine, with two Warthogs and one Mongoose waiting to be used. "Stay here, we'll move as soon as I meet with Lasky." The Master Chief ordered.

"Sure." Korra replied as the SPARTAN-II made his way up top.

"This is incredible, look at the machinery of this thing!" Asami said as she looked over the shoulder of one of the Marines.

"Excuse meâ€¦" The Marine said with an annoyed voice.

"Sorry." Asami apologized.

Then the Mammoth began to move, its mighty wheels ripping through rocks as it rolled on. Korra looked out one of the windows; it was pretty fast for its size.

"Ugh my headâ€¦" Korra said as she felt that migraine come up again.

* * *

><p>An old man opened his eye, he was tired and near his end. The person he saw was the one he most despised and most respected.<p>

"_Lord of Admirals, so many years have we battled. My finest opponent, the Mantle accepts all who live fiercely, who defend their young, build and struggle. And even those who dominate, as humans have dominated. Cruelly, without wisdom._"

"_But for all of us, there is a time like this. And for youâ€¦that time is now. Know this relentless enemy, killer of our children, Avatarâ€¦Lord of Admirals, soon we will face the enemy that you have facedâ€¦and we are afraid."_

"_The Cycle of Life shall once more continue on, and with itâ€¦ your legacy, Lord of Admirals._"

* * *

><p>The old man slowly nodded as his eyes closed and breathed his last gust of air.<p>

"Korra, you are freaking us out." Mako said as he snapped Korra back to reality.

"Whaâ€¦what happened?" Korra asked them.

"You tell us, your eyes turned all white and stuff." Bolin responded. "You freaked the Marines out!"

"That's not trueâ€¦" One of the Marines said from the back.

"I'm starting to see visionsâ€¦they are weird." Korra revealed, she was rubbing her head. "I think it has passed for now."

"Korraâ€¦tell us what you saw." Mako said as he placed his hand on her shoulder. He smirked.

"Fineâ€¦I saw the Didactâ€¦but he looked different. He didn't look like he does now, and I saw this other manâ€¦he was called the Lord of Admirals and he was an Avatar." Korra informed them. "And they battle in this big war and the Lord of Admirals lost after a million years of fightingâ€¦but I don't know what happened after his death."

"Sounds like they're getting more frequent." Asami said.

"Yeah." Korra then looked outside the window again, seeing only rocky walls and grounds. Then the Mammoth came to a halt.

"We have company!" A Marine shouted as he ran up and began to shoot. "Covenant!"

"Oh yeah! They're getting rocked!" Bolin yelled as he followed the rest of the combat garrison to the upper deck of the Mammoth.

"You okay for this?" Mako asked Korra.

"Please, I'm the Avatar, if an ancient water tribe Avatar fought against the Didact for a millennia, why couldn't I?" Korra responded as she kicked one of the side gates of the Mammoth opened and jumped out.

"Korra wait!" Mako shouted but it was too late. Korra was already outside, she smiled as she used earthbending to propel herself into the air and catch one of those Jackals Snipers on the side of the cliff by surprise. She kicked the bird-alien cleanly on the jaw, making it fall over the cliff.

Korra then looked over the terrain that was in front of the Mammoth, it looked like several Phantoms were circling around a fallen Pelican. She could see the Master Chief already leading an attack towards it.

Korra decided to aid him by bending an immense boulder from the side of the plateau she stood on and throw it at one of the Phantoms. The impact made the Phantom get distracted from the Chief and his team, the Covenant dropship then got focused on Korra, it began to fire its plasma cannons. Korra quickly jumped down into the valley, avoiding the plasma impacts by surfing down the rock walls via earthbending.

Mako joined Bolin on top of the top deck of the Mammoth. Bolin was throwing boulders at the Covenant attacked the Master Chief and Mako bended lightning towards the Ghosts firing at the Marines.

"Asami, you got a clear shot on the Elite there?" One of the Marines asked Asami.

"The gold one? You bet." Asami said as she looked down the scope of a sniper rifle she had taken from the armory of the Mammoth. She fired, blowing the brains out of an unsuspecting Elite leader.

"Nice one!" Mako said.

Korra kept running towards the Chief's position while she cooked several Grunts with firebending. Then a red armored Elite appeared from behind a rock and caught Korra by the neck. "Brrrraggh!" The alien yelled as it prepared itself to crush Korra with his iron grip.

Korra then struck the Elite by using firebending, blinding the alien warrior momentarily. She fell on the ground and placed her hands on the rocky surface. When she quickly stood up, two razor sharp rock swords appeared from the ground, Korra had pulled them out and impaled the Elite with them on the area where there was no armor.

"GAAARH!" The Elite screamed in pain. It then took an Energy Sword out in desperation and tried to slice the Avatar in two but Korra jumped back, avoiding the plasma edge of the sword. Korra focused as she saw a small puddle of water nearby, she bended the water into ice and threw it to the Elite. The Red Elite used his energy sword to protect itself from the ice spikes. But as it focused his attention to Korra again, it was whipped by a water whip.

The beast was flown into the air and landed onto the rock walls of the valley far away. Korra then saw that the Chief had recovered something, a wall device that resembled a pistol. He aimed it one of the flying Phantoms and then the huge cannon of the Mammoth fired and completely destroyed the alien craft. The other Phantom flew away, not wanting to be destroyed by the powerful gun.

Korra ran towards the Chief seeing that most hostiles were being handled by the Marines. "That was awesome!" Korra shouted.

"The first particle cannon is there, get back to the Mammoth with the others." The Master Chief ordered, Korra nodded and made her way back to the Mammoth with the other Marines.

The Chief then aimed the device towards the immense particle cannon which had destroyed two pelicans in one go, it was set. The Mammoth then moved its immense weapon and looked at the Forerunner cannon. It fired, completely destroying the particle cannon, tearing it to pieces.

"Wow!" Bolin yelled as he saw pieces of the cannon fly into the air in several directions.

"This thing definitely has power." Asami said as she gazed upon the barrel of the Mammoth's main gun.

Korra then joined them. "That was some cool moved Korra." Mako said.

"That Elite got lucky, I could've smashed it anytime." Korra boasted, the others laughed at her obviousness.

"Mission's not over, we got to move." The Master Chief said as he flew from the ground towards the upper deck of the Mammoth. He flew like an airbenderâ€¦"Jetpack."

"Ohâ€¦" Bolin said.

"Let's go then." Korra confidently said.

13. The Librarian

**Canyon**

* * *

><p>After clearing off several hostiles along the way, giant rocks blocked the Mammoths way to proceed towards its objective. Lasky came out of the driver's cabin and looked at the boulders blocking the way. "Bolin, Korra, anything you can do about this?" Lasky asked them.<p>

"No way, those rocks look way too heavy for the two of us to carry." Bolin responded.

"Chief what do you say?" Korra asked as she turned to look at the Master Chief. He was standing alone on the other side of the Mammoth overlooking the cliff. "Chief, something wrong?"

"Noâ€¦nothing. Cortana was just talking to me." The Master Chief replied, a hint of grief was in his deep voice. Enough for Korra to notice, but she complied with the old SPARTAN's wishes of not talking about it.

"Path is blocked by boulders too heavy for me and Bolin to carry alone. We may have to walk it to the place that controls those cannons." Korra informed him. The Chief nodded and walked towards Lasky and the others.

"I think this is it for the Mammoth, Chief." Lasky said.

"The command post for the particle cannons is thought that trench." Cortana said through the Chief's armor speakers.

"Sir, my team and I can move faster alone." The Chief said. "We'll see you back in Infinity, Commander." Cortana added.

"Alrightâ€¦go get them." Lasky approved their decisions. The Chief turned to his young teammates and commanded them to get ready to meet him by the trench.

Some minutes later, the SPARTAN-II's team regrouped by the trench. "Weapons ready." The Chief said. Asami reloaded her Battle Rifle as the others got their bending at the ready.

* * *

><p>Republic City_

"You're going to be fine, it's just a bruise." Lin Beifong, chief of police, said to the injured Tenzin as he was being treated by two Waterbending medics.

They were inside a tent, set up on the docks and outer edges of the city by the United Forces Armada and the ODST Regiments after they fell from the sky.

"Please, you have your armor, I only have robes on." Tenzin responded

as the armored Star-Lords returned. "Are the council members safe?"

"We could only find one survivor." Buck replied as his team

"Tenzin, Lin, it's so great to see you both." Tarrlok said as he walked to them.

"Out of everyone in that place, you got lucky enough to survive?" Lin asked him.

"I guess so; several of those beasts raided the city council once those ships fell from the sky." Tarrlok responded. "It would've died if it weren't for my rescuers."

"At least we have parts of the city back under our control." Tenzin said as he sighed, the medics stood up and vowed as they left.

"Any word from the Equalists? Think they got the worst of it?" Tarrlok asked Lin as he took seat on a nearby wooden chair.

"Equalists?" Buck asked.

"Radical anti-bending group, nothing too serious now." Lin responded.

"Terrorists? Things get better and betterâ€¦" Buck said as he placed his SMG on his right leg holster.

"Let me ask you something; are you a real Star-Lord? Like in the books?" Lin asked the UNSC Marine.

"A what now?" Buck responded, confused by the question. "No no no, my name like I told you guys before is Edward Buck, a Gunnery Sergeant of the UNSC Marine Corps. I come from Earthâ€¦well technically I was born in Draco III, but that's not the point...! What I'm trying to say is that I am Human, not an alienâ€¦Human."

"Like us? Impossible." Tenzin responded, thinking that the Star-Lord was trying to make them feel less stressed.

"Fine. Look." Buck said as he took out his helmet revealing a man with dark black hair, a serious yet calm face and grizzled look. He looked as human as the rest of the people on the planetâ€¦"See? Human."

"I cannot believe itâ€¦but you fell from the sky." Lin said trying not to sound too overwhelmed.

"Drop pods; every Trooper has one of those buckets full of love." Buck joked. The trio looked at him in wonder; he started to feel creeped out and decided to leave the tent. "Okayâ€¦I'll talk with your General nowâ€¦"

As he walked away from the tent, Buck placed his helmet on again but this time it was de-polarized, allowing his face to show through the visor. "This planet is weird."

* * *

><p>Canyon_

The Master Chief and his squad of benders fought their way towards what it seemed to be a Forerunner structure within the canyon's walls.

"Knights!" Korra yelled as several Promethean Knights teleported to aid the losing Covenant ground forces.

"I got the big one!" Mako responded as he lightning bend the Knight that had crystals growing from its back. The electric blast broke through the Promethean's shields and allowed Asami to finish it off with her Battle Rifle.

Korra firebended several Crawlers away from the structure's entrance. "Way's clear, come on!" She yelled.

"Coming!" Bolin said as he ran towards the entrance as it opened. The Master Chief stepped away from them shooting at the hostiles, giving Team Avatar cover. He threw a frag grenade towards the advancing enemy troops; as soon as the frag detonated he made his way inside the structure.

"There were a lot of them out there." Bolin said as he catches his breath.

"There may be more inside." Asami responded.

"Cortana to Infinity, we are entering the Forerunner structure." Cortana said through the radio. The voice of Del Rio could be heard being muffled by interference. "Breaking up but coordinates received, Infinity."

The inside doors opened, revealing the amazing interior of the structure. It was beautiful, unlike the core of the planet where it was all dull and grey this area was majestic in every way.

"Ah! Robots!" Bolin screamed as two flying automatons flew across the halls.

"Those are Sentinels, they are friendly." The Master Chief said as he walked through the halls following the Sentinels. The teens looked at each other and shrugged and followed the Chief.

"Soâ€¦why are we following them?" Korra asked.

"They seem to waiting for us, and the other gates are locked." The Chief answered as the gate behind the Sentinel opened.

The team followed the friendly AIs towards what it seems to be the main control room of the particle cannons.

"Put me inside that terminal." Cortana told the Chief. The SPARTAN took the datachip from his helmet and put it inside the terminal. "The particle cannon network must use these arrays for targeting and guidance."

"It's an automated system so it won't technicallyâ€¦" Cortana was explaining but she was interrupted.

"We get it, its automatic, can you shut it off already?" Mako said in an annoyed tone, earning a scoff from the irritated AI.

"Cortana to Infinity, the guns should be offline. How's it looking from up there?" She asked. "Infinty?"

"Cortanaâ€¦" The Chief said as he felt something wrong.

"There's something in hereâ€¦" Cortana responded as she tried to look for what it was. "CHIEF!" Then she disappeared.

"Cortana? Cortana!" The Master Chief yelled as the entire room darkened.

"What happened? Where'd she go?" Asami asked as the Master Chief activated his helmet's intergrated flashlight.

From the middle of the room, an energy bridge lightens up with a Sentinel hovering above it. It led to the right wall of the control room. "We follow it?" Korra asked, but the Master Chief was already making his way towards it. They followed.

The team walked through a dark corridor until they were out in the halls again, this time in the other side of the locked gates. "This looksâ€¦familiar." Mako said as he looked around the halls.

They kept walking until they came unto a room with a loud energy beam coming out the middle of the room.

"What is that?" Korra asked the Chief.

The Master Chief looked at her then at the beamâ€¦a figure appeared inside the beam's light. The Master Chief then began walking towards it. "Wait it could be dangerous!" Korra told him.

The Sentinels inside the room came online and hovered towards Korra, and grabbed her by the shoulders with their elongated 'arms'. "Whoa!"

"Korra!" Everyone yelled as she was carried towards the beam of light. The Chief ran to catch her but she was thrown into the beam. Seeing this, the Master Chief ran inside to get her outâ€¦

* * *

><p>Korra was met with a bright white light shining directly to her face. She placed her hand on the way of the blinding light, but then it began to dim. When everything was clearer to see, she saw the Master Chief standing behind her, several feet away. "Chief?"<p>

"_Reclaimersâ€¦_" The same silky voice that Korra had heard before appeared, Korra turned to look whose voice it was. A divine being appeared coming down from the bright sky; Korra must be in the Spirit World. But howâ€¦?

"Whoâ€¦who are you?" Korra asked the spiritâ€¦

"_I am what remains of the Forerunner once known as The Librarian._"

The spirit responded as she floated in front of Korra.

The Master Chief walked towards them, equally as puzzled by the situation at hand. "_My memories were retained to assist humanity on their path to the Mantle. Though sadly, that plan is now at risk._" The Librarian said as she looked at Korra. "_Avatarâ€¦is so good to see you again, after so many years._"

"We know each other?" Korra asked, confused more than ever now.

"_Long ago I met your past incarnation young Avatar, his name was Forthenchoâ€¦the Lord of Admirals._" The Librarian then turned her attention towards the Master Chief. "_The Didact is leaving Requiem, soon. You must stop him._"

"Leaving?" The Chief asked.

"_He seeks thisâ€¦" _The image of a strange device appeared before them. "_â€¦the Composer. A device which will allow him to finally contain the greatest enemy ever faced by the Forerunnersâ€¦_" She then looked at Korra. "_You._"

Then Korra's head began to hurt again, she felt that intense migraine get worse. "Aghâ€¦" Korra grunted.

"_You remember, the very essence of Forthencho still lives within you, Reclaimer, you too must know of your past so you can protect your futureâ€¦"_ The Librarian then connected Korra and the Master Chief's mind together with hers. "_Mankind spread into the stars with an unexpected, desperate violence. Entire systems feel before the Didact's warrior-servants rose to halt the aggression. The war ragedâ€¦Avatar Forthencho led the mankind's forces with courage and power, the fabled Lord of Admirals was the only living being that had ever faced the Didact and almost win._ _When the Didact finally exhausted the humans after a millennia, his sentence was severe._"

"_We had no way of knowing that the Forerunners were not your only enemy. Humanity hadn't been expanding. They were running. Weakened from our conflict, we were no match for the parasite which pursued you. The Forerunners made plans for a final, great journey. But the Didact refused to yield our Mantle of Resposability. He would save all life in the galaxyâ€¦at a cost._"

"_In the Forerunner's quest for transcendence, the Composer had been intended to bridge the organic and digital realms. It would have made us immortals. But its results soured. The stored personality fragmented, and out attempts to return them to biological states only created abominations. Such moral concerns faded from the Didact's attention. The Flood only assimilated living tissue. The Composer would provide the Didact his solutionâ€¦and his revenge._"

"The Prometheansâ€¦they are human." The Master Chief realized.

"_They were only the beginning. He would have encrypted your entire race if we had not removed the Composer from his care and imprisoned him here. That's where the Avatar came inâ€¦_" The Librarian said, she looked at Korra who was still recovering from the mind

touch.

"That means that you placed the Didact in here becauseâ€¦" Korra was starting to understand.

"_So when he awakened, his greatest, finest opponent would welcome him into a new age of peace. Sadly, that did not occur. The Avatar is the one that the Didact sees as his only equal, the Lord of Admirals is you, Avatar Korra as much as you are him._" The Librarian said.

"_Reclaimersâ€¦when I indexed mankind for repopulation, I hid seeds from the Didact. Seeds which would lead to an eventuality_" She continued. "_Your physical evolution, your combat skinâ€¦even your ancilla Cortana. You are the culmination of a thousand lifetimes of planning._"

"Planning for what?" The Master Chief asked. But then the entire realm started to rumble, the sounds of cracking earth could be heard.

"_He has found us._"

"_**Even in death, her meddling continues.**_" The powerful voice of the Didact was heard, thundering from the skies. Several Promethean Knights appeared, coming up on top of metallic spires ready to strike.

"_Reclaimer, Avatar! The genesong I placed within you contents many gifts and unlocks various abilities, including an immunity to the Composer. But they must be unlocked!_" The Librarian quickly explained.

"How?" The Chief asked.

"_**RELINQUISH YOUR CONTACT ESSENCE!**_"

"_Your evolutionary journey must be acceleratedâ€¦you both must be brought to next step of evolution."_ The Librarian said.

"The next step of what!?" Korra asked.

"Can we defeat the Didact without it?" The Master Chief asked, not wanting Korra to get harmed.

"_No._" The Librarian responded clearly. The Chief looked at Korra, she was utterly confused and scarred from what was occurring. There was no other choice.

"Then do it." He accepted for both of them.

"_Prepare._"

14. The Avatar State

**Inside Forerunner Structure**

"Take cover!" Mako yelled as dozens of Promethean Crawlers entered the room they were in. The Master Chief and Korra were still trapped

within the beam of light, and Mako, Asami and Bolin were outnumbered by the waves of Prometheans.

"We are going to be robot food!" Bolin began to panic as his earthbending was useless inside the structure. Asami was using a Promethean weapon she had found, she was shooting at the Crawlers expertly but there were too many.

Mako's bending was unhindered; he used lightning strikes to weaken the advancing Promethean Knights, making them fall back until their shields regenerated. "We can't stay here for too long!" He yelled.

Then, Korra and the Chief's bodies began to glow, energy flew over them. The beam of light pulsated with power, and then the two of them fell on the ground on their knees. Korra opened her eyes, they were pure glowing white.

"Oh ohâ€¦" Bolin said as Korra began to levitate off the floor and the air inside the complex began to get heavier. Mako, Asami and Bolin could feel the gravity inside the room getting heavier and heavierâ€¦but when they turned to look at the multitude of Crawlers attacking themâ€¦they were getting squished under the pressure. The Knights then ran towards Korra, ignoring the others.

Korra then extended her hand and froze the mechanical beast on its place, Korra then turned her open hand into a fist. The Promethean's armor shell began to dent, its innards exploding into orange goo and spewing out of its body. It then fell on the ground, as dead as a digital being could be and then disappeared in digital haze.

Korra then looked at the others, her white eyes only indicating that she was in the legendary Avatar State. The Sentinels entered the room from the vents on the walls, and looked at the Avatar. Then they left floating towards the exit gate. Korra's eyes then returned to normal, she fell on her knees feeling extremely weak after what had occurred. The Master Chief then walked towards her, he definitely hadn't changed on the outside but Korra could now feel the spiritual energies within the people around herâ€¦and his felt different from the others.

"You're alright?" The Chief asked her as he walked towards a nearby terminal, there Cortana waited for him.

"Yeahâ€¦I'll be fine." Korra replied as she was helped back up by Mako and Bolin.

"That was amazing, Korra. How you went all Avatar State on those Prometheans!" Bolin excitingly said.

"I went into the Avatar State? But I thought thatâ€¦wow. Is that what the Librarian unlocked for me?" Korra asked as she looked at the SPARTAN.

"I don't know, but we must keep moving." The Master Chief responded as he went towards the exit gate. The teens looked at Korra, she then followed the Master Chief with the others behind her.

"Chief, what happened? Your bio readings are all over the map!" Cortana said, the Master Chief's DNA had been drastically changed.

And he wasn't the only oneâ€¦he and the others entered an elevator that was going up.

"It's a long story, but I know what the Didact's after." The Master Chief replied to Cortana.

"I know that part; the Librarian filled me in when she snatched me from the system." Cortana informed. "But what I don't know is what she did to you and to Korra."

The elevator stopped and the group stepped into another metallic hallway that lead to only one opened door. "A portal." Korra said as they approached it.

"It should take us back to the surface." Cortana said through the Master Chief's helmet speakers. They all nodded and jumped into the portal.

* * *

><p>Canyon Battlefield_

"Sierra One One Seven to Infinity, what's our status?" The Master Chief instantly asked through the comms as they exited from whatever the portal used to send them back to the canyon. The immense ship known as the UNSC Infinity hovered above the heated battle between UNSC forces and Covenant Storm ground troops.

"We're taking a beating up here!" Del Rio responded, and it was quite true. Several Liches were attacking the ship.

"Does the Infinity have a shot to the gravity well?" The Chief asked as he commanded the group to take cover behind some nearby rocks and assist the UNSC Marines fight several Ghosts and ground troops as the tanks rolled to destroy the Wraiths on the other side of the plateau.

"Negative. We'll never be able to get a target with all the air traffic we're seeing." Del Rio replied. Warthogs then appeared to provide support for the advancing tanks. One stopped, it didn't have a passenger or a gunner. Asami and Bolin quickly hopped on the vehicle, Asami going shotgun and Bolin happily going gunner.

"See ya later Mako! Wooo Hooo!" Bolin yelled as the Warthog rolled towards the heated battle. Mako turned to Korra.

"This is what he always wanted." Mako joked.

"I bet." Korra teplied.

"Captain, what if we can spot the target for you with the laser designator?" Cortana advised.

"Do it! TAC-COM, find the Master Chief's coordinates for somewhere with line of sight!" Del Rio said as he ordered his officers to send a target designator into the battlefield.

"I'm reading Sierra One One Seven on-sensor." Sgt. Pete Stacker said as the Chief's entered a nearby tanked, telling tis driver to hop inside the gunner position. "Everyone, form up on the Chief!"

Mako and Korra also sat on the sides of the tank, providing extra support as they shot several Ghost drivers in the head with their newly obtained Covenant Carbines.

"You know, I would've never told anyone that I killed aliens but I killed aliens!" Mako jokingly said as he spoke over the roaring engine of the tank.

The Master Chief destroyed the Wraiths blocking the path towards his objective. The other tanks and warthogs followed the Chief towards the next area, were several ODSTs had been dropped to provide assistance to the advancing troops.

"We got reinforcements!" One of the ODSTs yelled as the tanks shot the energy shielding of several power nods that gave energy to an energy wall that blocked off the area towards the clearing were the Chief could use the target designator.

Phantoms flew down towards the intense battle and dropped two more Wraiths to destroy the human tanks. The Master Chief aimed the tank's gun at the Phantom and shot right into the cabin, making the dropship explode, several of its pieces falling on top of some Grunt troops.

The Master Chief used the tank to destroy the energy nodes, making the energy wall disappear. The attack force rolls up towards another Covenant encampment. "Chief, we'll take care of these bozos! You get the thingy!" Bolin said through the radio.

The Master Chief gets out of his tank along with Korra and Mako, they pass through the boulders blocking the way of the other vehicles. "There it is!" Korra pointed towards a supply pod, in it there was a target designator.

"Infinity we're at the gravity well." Cortana informed the ship's CIC.

"Then paint that damn target so we can get out of here!" Del Rio responded from the other side.

"You heard him, Chief. Line up the shot." The Master Chief grabbed the designator and aimed at the immense Forerunner gravity well inside the vast valley below.

"Whoaâ€¦and to think we're going to blow that up." Korra said as they gazed upon it.

"Cover your ears." The Chief said as a missile came out of the Infinity and towards the gravity well. The explosion was deafening, the well exploded in a wave of fire. Its floating arms fell on top of main structure and the core was devastated beyond repair.

The Master Chief looked on at the fireworks and then turned to walk away. Korra looked at the SPARTAN-II leave the area.

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity_

"Infinity cannot handle that kind of punishment, not again." Del Rio said as he looked over the damage assessment of the ship.

"This isn't about us or this ship anymore." Cortana said worryingly.

"Sir, we've seen what the Didact is capable of. If we let him leave this world, humanity will be at risk. We are already at risk." The Master Chief added.

"Look, I understand what you think you sawâ€¦"

"THINK!?" Cortana couldn't believe what was coming out of the captain's mouth.

"Captain, uhâ€¦please listen to us. The Didact is gaining power at this very moment. If you leaveâ€¦my people will die! Everyone will die if he isn't stop! Help us please!" Korra insisted, she looked at the captain with the hope that he will aid them.

"Sir, we all do respectâ€¦we have to help her people. They are humans too." The Master Chief said.

Captain Del Rio sighed and then looked at the Master Chief. "With all due respect to you Master Chief, I cannot jeopardize the lives of the soldiers inside this ship for the hallucinations of an aging SPARTAN, his malfunctioning AI and a teenager with severe messiah complex issues."

"Sirâ€¦what if they're right?" Lasky asked, earning himself a displeased look from the captain.

"NAV, as soon as we are air tight, I want a course laid for Carinae Station. Comm, prepare warning beacon for all those on top." Del Rio ordered.

As he finished his sentence, electricity began to short-circuit several NAV computers and scare the officers on deck. "Cortana?" The Chief asked his AI companion.

"It's not me Chief." Cortana replied, she looked extremely mad and to the point of breakdown but she wasn't the one doing this. Then he turned towards Korraâ€¦"Noâ€¦"

Korra had entered the Avatar State, the response from Del Rio in not rescuing her people from extinction. Her eyes glow pure white once more, making Del Rio and Lasky pretty frightened as she began to hover above the floor. Palmer took out her DMR but it was quickly destroyed with one swift movement of Korra's right hand.

Then the bridge was being compressed by Korra's very presence, and winds generated inside the compact space. The winds inside the bridge were intense enough to dent the metallic columns and destroy several command modules and devices.

"Stop her now!" Del Rio ordered. "Shoot her!"

Lasky hesitated in taking out his pistol. "**WE WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO LEAVE THIS PLANET!**" The voice of a thousand people spoke as Korra's mouth opened.

The winds picked up, but Lasky took out his magnum and aimed at Korra's head. The Master Chief, who was resisting the winds, took the pistol off Lasky's hands. He stomped towards Korra, fighting back the winds that pushed him away.

Lasky was being held from flying into the glass of the front screen by Palmer and Del Rio was holding on to the command desk. The other officers held on to their posts. The Master Chief grabbed Korra's leg and pulled her down back to the ground and grabbed her by the shoulders firmly.

"We will not leave, I promise." The Master Chief said while looking at the blank eyes of Korra. Her face was mirrored by the Chief's golden visor, but through it two blue eyes looked back.

The winds died down, and Korra's eyes returned to normal as her body weakened by entering into the Avatar State was being held from falling by the Master Chief. Lasky rushed towards them and helped Korra to stay on her feet.

"I want her executed NOW!" Del Rio ordered the Master Chief.

The Chief took Cortana's data chip off from the command desk and put it back inside his helmet. "If you won't stop the Didactâ€¦we will." The Chief responded.

"I am ordering youâ€¦TO EXECUTE THAT MENACE!" Del Rio once again ordered with pure anger this time.

"No, sir." The Chief replied as he walked away from the captain and towards Korra and Lasky.

"Lieutenant arrest them! Arrest them!" Del Rio ordered Palmer as she stood, not knowing what to actually do.

"CAPTAIN!" Lasky yelled back.

"Get word back to Earth; tell them that trouble is coming. My team and I will do what we can back here." The Chief told Lasky, he then turned away from them and helped Korra walked from the bridge.

"Youâ€¦you didn't have to." Korra said.

"It is my duty to protect humanityâ€¦whatever the cost." The Chief responded as they headed to a nearby lift in route back to the armory.

15. Nightmares & Graves

Didact!

DIDACT!

**DIDACT!**

Korra opened her eyesâ€¦_Didactâ€¦_there he was! The enemy of

humanity, the ancient god of war himself, cladded in his nigh-omnipotent armor, ready to battle.

Korra narrowed her eyes as the Didact's helmet collapsed back to his armor; his dark red eyes stared at the Avatar of Humanity. "_Human, here you are at last. For eons have I waited for this end, and now here we are once againâ€¦face to face. _" The helmet came back to protect his head, glowing bright orange.

"I won't allow you to destroy humanity!" Korra shouted back at the ancient Forerunner warlord. Korra felt the power of her thousand past lives empowering her. She tapped into the raw power of the evolved Avatar State.

Avatar Korra attacked the Forerunner warlord, he blocked her attacks but they were damaging his so-called indestructible combat skin. "_Impossible!_"

Korra smiled as she saw herself beating the god of war himself in battle, she kept at it until she landed one good punch at the Didact's face. Denting his helmet and making the towering Forerunner fall on the ground.

"Yes! I beat the Didact!" Korra yelled with joy.

"_Foolish girlâ€¦_" Said the wounded Didact. "_Without me the galaxy is doomedâ€¦nothing will stop them._"

Then the mighty Didact disappeared into the air as if he had never existed. "What theâ€¦!? What's going on?!" Korra felt a strange presence in the arena she was standing in.

"_**Do not be afraidâ€¦**_" A disturbed, corrupted voice sounded. Then tentacles ripped through the metal walls of the area and surrounded the young Avatar. "No!" Korra yelled as she firebended to keep the enormous and monstrous tentacles away from her.

"â€¦_**I am peace, I am SALVATION!**_"

Korra was then grabbed by one of the grotesque tentacles, she wanted to activate the Avatar State again but every time she tried she felt her past lives screamâ€¦agonizingly. "_**We exist together now, two corpses in one grave...**_"

Korra closed her eyes as she felt being dragged into the ground. She screamed but her screams were silenced by the creature.

"_**I am a timeless chorus. Join your voice with mine, and sing victory everlasting**__**!**_"

* * *

><p>"Korra wake up!" Korra heard the voice of a worried Mako as Asami shook her. It seemed that Korra had passed out when the Master Chief had brought her down to the armory.<p>

They were now in the medical deck, she was on a comfy white bed, and next to her were Mako, Asami, Bolin and Lasky. He had come down from the bridge with some absurd orders to detain her forâ€¦capital punishment.

"Ughâ€¦my head feels like exploding right now." Korra said as she rubbed the sides of her head. "What happened?"

"You passed out while in the armory." Asami replied.

"You weren't breathingâ€¦and the Chief carried you all the way from there to here. Three decks belowâ€¦the doctors couldn't bring you back until your eyes shot opened while inside the Avatar State." Mako added.

"Did I do something badâ€¦while in it?" Korra asked them.

"Luckily for us, you just lied on your bed, but it was pretty freaky." Lasky responded. "But you started to breathe normally after that episode."

"That was some scare you gave us, Korra." Bolin said trying to bring Korra's mood up a little.

"Then why did you shake me?" Korra asked Asami.

"You started to hyperventilate. I told her to do so." Lasky responded for Asami. "Your heart rate accelerated and we feared that you would fall into heart failureâ€¦it was that severe."

Korra looked at the wires plugged into her arm leading towards a bag full of a water-like substance. "I had the strangest of nightmaresâ€¦I saw myself beating the Didact but then something much moreâ€¦worse replaced him." Korra revealed.

"Much worse? What can be worse than the Didact?" Asked Mako.

"I don't know butâ€¦I can still hear its voice." Korra responded as she remembered that dreaded voiceâ€¦those disgusting tentacles dragging her like a ragdoll and the screamsâ€¦the painful screams of her past lives. Crying in painâ€¦"Where's the Chief?"

"He's in the hangar. Waiting." Mako replied.

"Waiting? Waiting for who?" Korra asked again.

"For you." Lasky answered this time. "Whatever you two saw inside that Forerunner structureâ€¦has convinced him and Cortana that you're essential in the defeat of that Didact."

"Then I should be going." Korra said as she tried to stand off the bed, she took the tube out of her arm making the machine next to them make a beeping sound. A nearby doctor turned the device off.

"If you, we go." Mako said as Korra started to walk towards the exit.

"Noâ€¦I can't risk you guys to get killed out there. Commander, when you exit the roof could you please lead them back to Republic City?" Korra asked Lasky.

"I will." Lasky agreed with a smile and a nod. "Good luck out there."

Korra nodded and then looked at her friends. "This isn't a goodbye."

"We know." Bolin said.

"See you on Republic City." Asami added.

Korra turned and exited the medical room and headed towards a nearby elevator. "Korra wait!"

"Mako?"

"Before you goâ€¦here." Mako took out his scarf and placed it around her exposed neck. "For luck."

She smiled; they both looked at each other for a moment until one of them broke the silence. "Chief is waiting for me."

"Go save the world, Korra." Mako said as they both hugged. Korra ran towards the elevator where a marine was about to walk out when Korra stopped him right in his tracks.

"Get me to the hangar now." Korra told him.

"Which hangar? There's like a hundred of them." The marine responded.

"To the one where the Master Chief is in."

* * *

><p>Hangar_

"I can give you over 40,000 reasons why that sun isn't real." Cortana said as she looked out a window. The sunset was astonishing inside the planet but for Cortana it didn't lookâ€¦real. "I know it because the emitter's Raleigh effect is disproportionate to its suggested size. I know it because its stellar cycle it's more symmetrical to that of an actual star. But for all thatâ€¦I will never actually know if it looks realâ€¦if it feels real."

The Master Chief loaded his Assault Rifle, looked at it for any abnormalities. Cortana's rampancy was escalatingâ€¦rapidly, maybe if they defeat the Didact just in time they couldâ€¦"Before this is all over, promise me you'll figure out which one of us the machine." Cortana said to the SPARTAN. He looked at her in wonder, but decided not to ask anything.

From the door leading to the small storage room they were in, Korra stepped in. She looked to be ready, having already grabbed the standard UNSC marine armor from one of the armor crates nearby. "Chief." Korra said.

"What happened in the bridgeâ€¦it was just thatâ€¦" Korra tried to say.

"There's no need to apologize, I would've done the same thing." Cortana said as the Master Chief took out the data chip from the console and put it inside his helmet.

"Let's go get the Didact." The Chief said, and Korra nodded with a hopeful expression. Outside, a pelican fully loaded for combat pursue, thanks to Lasky, was ready for them.

* * *

><p>Republic City_

"Ah, Gunnery Sergeant, glad to finally meet you." The well-admired General Iroh greeted Buck.

"Likewise." Buck replied as he saw several United Forces soldiers coming from their respective ships. "How's the situation across the other countries?"

"Not good I'm afraid." Iroh responded as they began to walk towards his command tent. "The Fire Nation is not doing so good, alien air forces keeping them inside their citadel defenseâ€¦the Capital city. The Earth Kingdom in the other hand is still going at it deep with Ba Seng Sei and the other major cities. We had to evacuate the entire surviving Southern Water Tribe population towards the Northâ€¦they were massacred in a moment's notice."

"The areas around the city?" Buck asked as he looked at the map of the world.

"Barely holding, ground forces are making short work of the resistance in the provinces up north." General Iroh replied. "If we are going to win this war, we are going to need every able body to do their part."

"That's where we come in my dear General."

"That voiceâ€¦" Iroh turned to see the terrorist, the bane of Republic City in the fleshâ€¦.Amon and his Equalists. The nearby soldiers took battle formations and so did the Equalist around Amon. "You have a lot of guts showing yourâ€¦face around here."

"General, you insult me. We made be on opposite ends of the spectrumâ€¦but this is our world too. We will help you repel the alien invader, a great chance for extremes to meet." Amon said, he then looked at the fully armored ODST next to the general. "You must be one of the men that fell from the sky, tell me do you bend?"

"No, we don't." Buck responded, not wanting to interact with a terrorist. He knew full well how terrorist wereâ€¦the past in the colonies has taught him that much.

"That's fortunate, we shall learn of each other soon enough." Amon said as he retreated along with his Equalists. "We'll be in touch General."

"General Iroh what are you doing siding with that menace!?" Tarrlok yelled as he came out of his tent.

"We are going to need all the help we can get." Iroh responded. "The Troopers have the technology but are too few to rely on heavily; we need the Equalists if we are going to repel the aliens away from the city and the republic."

"I'm the one deciding things here, General, and I sayâ€¦!"

"Tarrlok please, you are not the only surviving member of the council." Tenzin interrupted as he walked towards them with Lin. "The General is right, we need everyone in this fight. Only together can we come out on top."

Tarrlok sighed and left. "Your people better gear up with any weaponry you have, we will move at 0600." Buck informed them as he headed towards the UNSC Ground HQ, which consisted of just one surviving company of ODSTs.

* * *

><p>The Cryptum_

That cannot be! I took all the precautions, all the measures to keep it at bay. Have I failed again?

_No, I cannotâ€¦but what has happened has passed. Installation 03 has been compromised, both externally and internally. The Parasite has been awakened inside the installationâ€¦and the Composer might become unreachable. _

But I am the Didact, and I will recover what was stolen from me. Humanity and the Parasite shall feel the presence of the Mantle's Approach!

16. That Old, Familiar Feeling

**Vadam State, Sanghelios**

There couldn't be more than one explanation for it, Ivanoff Station was being attacked but by whom? The wretched rebels were not in the immediate area around Installation 03, and no Jackal Pirate ships had entered the system.

The Arbiter knew that it was something much worse. He sat on top of his throne, as leader of the Vadam state and the most respected Sanghelli on the planet it was his job to monitor and maintain the frail alliance with the humans. It hadn't been too long ago when he was invited by Lord Terrance Hood to see the inner workings of the human's newest vesselâ€¦the Infinity.

It was sudden, the Arbiter thought, it had occurred in a moment's notice. The station was fine one minute ago and now there was barely any communications to it. Their last message was intercepted, it had been sent to the UNSC FLEETCOM.

The Arbiter looked at the messageâ€¦

"HELP! We need help! Unidentified intruders in the attention! They are ripping us apart literallyâ€¦.*static*â€¦we are losing men and fast! Oh no they are getting through the door! OH NO HELP HELP! HELP! GHRRRRâ€¦.*message ends*"

It was horrible; his face was sliced off completely by some kind of sharp tendril. The Arbiter knew what he was looking at. He stood up from his throne. "I want my ship and four additional vessels ready

for lift-off." He ordered.

"But sir, if you are gone, we are going to be defenseless against the rebels." A golden elite said.

"I shall leave my ally and friend, Rtas 'Vadum in command of both the Vadam and Vadum states until my return." The Arbiter responded, the Sanghelli vowed as he made his way to his quarters. The armor of the Arbiter was waited for him there; he grabbed the helmet and placed on his head.

* * *

><p>Pelican_

"You know how to fly this ship right?" Korra asked the SPARTAN-II, she was sitting on the co-pilot's seat in the cockpit.

"The Chief has experience in almost all vehicles made by man." Cortana replied. The engines roared, and the lights of the tunnel out of the ship led towards the hole out. "You better put your seat belt on."

"Oh right." Korra placed her seat belt on as the dropship began to shake and the inertia pushed her into the back of her not-so soft seat. The pelican moved quickly, going through the tunnel extremely fast until they were now flying in the open air. Miles over the surface, Korra couldn't help but to look down the windshield and then looked at the floating gigantic Forerunner towers ahead.

"Didact dead ahead." Cortana said, the immense Cryptum of the Didact floated in the middle of the towers.

"How are we going to get pass those shields?" Chief asked as he spotted the Cryptum's red energy shields protecting the sphere.

"There are two towers giving power to it, one communications and the other power supply. If we cut the communications towards the Didact's ship, he won't see us coming." Cortana informed. "Let's go to the first tower."

The Chief piloted the Pelican towards the communications tower.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's Orbit_

Several Sanghelii CCS-class battlecruisers and one Assault Carrier, the Shadow of Intent, entered the system. At the spearhead of the Fleet of Retribution, Thel Vadam otherwise known as the mighty Arbiter looked at the station through the bridge of the Shadow of Intent.

"Arbiter sir, there are still several survivors within the human station." A red armored Sanghelii reported.

"Special Operations units at the ready." Another Sanghelii informed. The Arbiter looked on at the silent research operations and then

towards the ring, Gamma Halo. He turned around and headed to meet the Special Operations troopers waiting for him.

A single Phantom dropship flew towards the stations opened hangar bay, it looked like the shields had been deactivated from within. A failed attempt in throwing the Flood into the vacuum of space.

A single Elite warrior, cladded in dark armor and wearing a special space suit, came out of the Phantom. He floated towards the shield controls and activated the barrier. The Phantom descended and touched down on the dropship bay. The Arbiter and several other Spec Ops Elites jumped out of the dropship, as soon as he did the Arbiter smelled the air.

"What is it?" An Elite asked his leader.

"That stenchâ€¦I've smelled it before." The Arbiter replied as he readied his Plasma Rifle.

* * *

><p>Communications Tower_

"Wowâ€¦" Korra said as she entered the massive tower, it was immense. It was like nothing she had seen before, even more impressive than the Forerunner structure in the canyon.

"Over there, at the other side, there's the communication tower's power." Cortana told the Chief. "We'll have to the gondola to get there, activate it."

The Master Chief and Korra entered the Forerunner gondola. The Chief activated the transport and they began to move towards the power source. As they waited for it to get there, Korra looked at the weapons cache within the transport.

Various Forerunner weapons, all with a different function. Asami said that you didn't have to know how to use them; they would just feel natural in your hands. "Hmph." Korra grabbed the Light Rifle off the weapon cache and looked at it.

It was majestic in appearance and deadly in use. A weapon worthy of a king or a conquerorâ€¦nevertheless Korra thought against using it. She was the Avatar, the four elements were the weapons she was happy enough in using. Korra began to think about all that had happened recently, from the initial invasion of the world to her horrific nightmare. It was all quite hard to take for some as young and inexperienced as her.

Korra wasn't only a Fully-Realized Avatar, thanks to the Librarian, but also an evolved Avatar. She didn't know how she had been 'upgraded' but it had something to do with the fact that the Avatar State sounded to be at least thirty times more powerful than it had ever been before with the previous Avatars.

Then she felt her head ache again. 'Ugh, I thought that the Librarian lady fixed this!' Korra yelled inside her mind.

* * *

><p>"Ultimately this decision doesn't fall unto me." A man in a green uniformed said as he walked alongside another uniformed man. "His powers are off the scale."<p>

"Should we analyze the subject?" The other uniformed man asked.

"Like I said, it's all Parangosky and the spooks." The green uniformed man responded as he looked at the window in front of him, below inside the testing labs, what seemed to be a fully armored ODST was shooting flames out of his hands. "This is something we have never seen before."

* * *

><p>Korra snapped out of her hallucination, it looked like one of those soldiers of the UNSC was firebending. That was, as far as she knew it, impossible unlessâ€¦ "Tangos on out right!" The Chief yelled as a Jackal sniper shot at them with a Beam Rifle.<p>

Korra ducked under one of the barriers of the gondola, she came out of cover quickly and shot a lightning bolt at the jackal, frying it instantly. "We got more bad guys!" Korra told the Master Chief as he jumped out of cover and dropped down to an energy bridge connecting the gondola and the checkpoint.

"I am going to reset power to the gondola, stay here and keep it safe." The Chief ordered.

"But-"

"Stay here." The Chief readied his DMR and ran up to reset the power for their transport. Korra was a little mad that the Master Chief had told her to stay and avoid the fighting butâ€¦maybe it was better for her to avoid the Fuel-Rod wielding Storm Elites.

As soon as Korra turned to check on the other side of the transport, she hit with something on her way. She looked up and she beheld at the individual who shouldn't have been here in the first placeâ€¦

"_Relentless enemy, killer of our childrenâ€¦you hide below the flesh of this youngling but I can see through the disguise._"

* * *

><p>Republic City_

Gunnery Sergeant Buck's ODST squad moved out of the safe zone alongside several United Forces soldiers and ventured inside the city center. They were connected with the other squads through radio contact; they would re-take the city today or never.

"Any info from last night's recon?" Buck asked Romeo, the sniper expert of his squad.

"The Rookie said that there were several Jackals patrolling inside the buildings ready to snipe anyone who entered the downtown area. The place that used to be the city's museum has been converted into a forward operations base by the Covenant." Romeo informed.

"Any armor?" Buck asked again.

"Little to none Gunny, mostly Ghosts and Shades. Nothing too serious." Dutch answered as he patted his Spartan Laser. "Nothing too serious for Vera here."

Buck smiled; his squad hadn't change one bit except that Dare had stayed on Earth. She would've loved bossing these United Forces soldiers around. "Hey Rookie." Buck called him, the ODST turn to look at him as they walked, he didn't say a word. Typical. "Go ahead with Mickey and inspect the area ahead, tell us anything of importance through radio alright?"

The Rookie nodded and went ahead with Mickey, and headed into a nearby dark alley. "You sure about sending them two alone?" Romeo asked.

"They can handle it." Dutch responded. "Unlike you pansies, pick up the pace!" The United Forces soldiers jolted at the sudden call of the weapons expert. "Heheheh, I can get used to this."

"Uhhâ€¦Gunny?" Mickey's voice sounded through the radio frequency.

"What is it?" Buck asked back.

"Most of the Covenant here are either dead or gone." Mickey replied.

"What do you mean dead?" Buck asked once more, not believing a single word. "They were there a night ago."

"Not anymoreâ€¦" Mickey said as he walked over a dead body of a Jackal and the eviscerated corpse of a Grunt. Several in factâ€¦ "I think I'm going to be sick."

The Rookie walked towards one of the many fallen Storm Elites, he noticed a patternâ€¦their insides had been scrambled. This wasn't good at allâ€¦

Then General Iroh and his squad catched up with Buck and his group. "What's the situation?" Iroh asked the sergeant.

"For now? Too quiet, we were able to take down some Grunts here and there on our way here, I sent out two of my guys ahead to see if anything was out of the ordinary." Buck informed.

"Anything?"

"The entire Covenant force in this area is dead." Buck replied as he took out his helmet. "I don't like the feeling of this General, something bad is going on."

"I already contacted Tenzin's metalbender group, they have run up with heavy resistance up north and Amon in the south. What's so different in this place?" Iroh asked.

"Map's says that there had been some kind of underground cave around

here right? If so, then the Covenant found something." Buck responded as he took out an old map out of one of the pouches of his belt.

"Yeah, the Cave of Discovery, it was unearthed some years ago. What's wrong with it?"

"I've seen this pattern before, Covenant dig something and it's not goodâ€¦for us or them." Buck said as he activated his radio again. "Mickey, Rookie, come back here."

"On our way Gunny." Mickey responded.

"Hey Dutch you still have those charges?" Buck asked his weapons expert.

"Mickey told me to keep them hot for him, yeah I still do." Dutch replied.

"Explosives? For what?" Iroh asked.

"Let the other groups battle the Covenant, we have to clean up this districtâ€¦this is an ambush sir. My squad and some soldiers are going to go into the cave and detonate these charges."

"You still haven't answered my question."

"If we don't do thisâ€¦everyone, us, the Covenantâ€¦everyone will die." Buck said as he put on his helmet again. "The Flood is here."

* * *

><p>Communications Tower_

"Korra!" The Chief yelled as he saw Korra looking at the ground. She had been fighting several Promethean Knights by herself. The gondola started back up, and Korra was able to defeat the last of the Knights before leaning on a nearby wall and catch her breath. "You okay?"

"Yeahâ€¦I'm fine." Korra responded as she looked at the floor. Sweat flew on her nose and fell on the metallic floor, the gondola started moving again. Korra remembered her encounterâ€¦brief encounter with him again.

"_The Avatar comes back to face the Didact, an event I have longed for ages._" The Didact said as he walked towards Korra who was backing away from the towering Forerunner warlord.

"Then you'll wait a little longer!" Korra yelled back as she airbended a strong gust of air at the Didact who just tanked it as if a breeze of spring air had flowed on his visage.

"_So misguided._ The Didact said as he turned and froze Korra on her place. "_The elemental control of your ancestors has always been of great intrigue to us. Even to the point of us taking these abilities from half of your populationâ€¦or so we thought._"

Then a little blue flame appeared over the Didact's palm.

"_Elementary, uselessâ€¦primitive. These powers were nothing but mere magic tricks for my kind._" The Didact said as he extinguished the flame of his hand. "_But you had something we didn'tâ€¦full access to the Domain. Unlimited access to the secrets long lost to us, this is what truly angered me the most. Humans with freedom to enter the Domain? Where the Mantle was ever so bright? Blasphemy._"

"Iâ€¦I don't know what youâ€¦are talkingâ€¦about." Korra said as she struggled to speak.

"_No matter, soon I shall compose your race and prepare what is coming next. I willâ€¦waitâ€¦no, it is not possible._" The Didact freed Korra from his grasp, as he began to feel an intense attack on his mind. "_Out of my head, Parasite! You shall not invade what the galaxy needs so dearly!"_

Korra was freaked out by the Didact's sudden moment of weakness, he was moving around as he hold on to his head. He made his helmet come back on his head; ending the mind attackâ€¦He looked at Korra again and disappeared. As soon as he did, three Promethean Knights took his place.

"The communications to the Didact's ship have stoppedâ€¦" Cortana reported.

"What do you mean?" The Chief asked.

"The Didact's shipâ€¦it's moving!" Cortana responded. "Get out of here and head back outside!"

17. Cryptum

**Hello! Before I start I wanted to reply to a comment done about my last chapter. I know that the Humans were unable to enter the Domain, they indeed were incapable. But the Avatar was the only one who had the ability to do so. More things will be revealed once our heroes battle the Didact, but for now I will say this.
>

* * *

><p>Thousands of Years Agoâ€¦_

* * *

><p>Installation 04_

An armored figure walked through a dark metal corridor, he was followed by a hovering monitor with all due haste. The armored figure was known as the IsoDidact, he has been given the task to do the unthinkable. To activate the Halo Array and end all life in the galaxyâ€¦

"Wonderful news, the Halos are all ready to fire." The monitor informed the Forerunner as he activated the security lockdown of the activation device.

"_What's the situation in the Maginot Line?_" The IsoDidact asked as he looked the maintenance of this ring. Installation 04.

"Still holding, but for how long is unknown."

The IsoDidact looked at his hands; these hands will be responsible for galactic genocide. He closed his eyes and turned to leave but before he didâ€¦"_If you were the one in my place, would you do it?_"

The monitor was surprised by such question but decided to answer it. "Yes." The IsoDidact sighed and walked out of the control room leaving the monitor hovering alone.

One he exited the control room, a Warrior-Servant transport ship waited for him. IsoDidact took one last look at the icy tundra surrounding the control center of this ring. He then entered the ship and left the Halo and headed towards the bigger Forerunner ship orbiting the gas giant.

* * *

><p>Installation 00, the lesser Ark_

The IsoDidact entered the immense Citadel, in it there were the holographic representations of the seven Halo Rings, all primed to fire at his command. He made his towards the activation pedestal, guarded by his Warrior-Servants.

He stood there looking at the control panel; he knew he would have to do it. But before he did, the mighty IsoDidact remembered his wife The Librarian. She was probable still inside her garden, taking care of it and those around it. The IsoDidact pained him to do this, while his wife was far away from his arms.

He opened a communications line between him and Erde-Tyrene, he would speak to her one last time before everything ended.

The channel opened.

"_My love, I call unto thee in the end of times so we could share these last moments before oblivion._" The IsoDidact said as he saw the visage of the Librarian, still working in her garden.

"_Husband, I am with joy in seeing you once more. The last time I will be seeing you, for I am not going to with you once the Array has been fired._" The Librarian replied.

"_It pains me, deep into my heart, to leave thee alone beyond my embrace._" The IsoDidact said as he felt the growing feeling of weakness inside of his very being.

"_Do not hammer thyself my husband, I am happy to embark on this great journey doing what I loved. I have already separated the two splinter groups of Humans, one with the primordial ability to manipulate the elements and the other with the potential to do so._" The Librarian replied as she categorized the last living humans and sent them to the Ark and the other to the Shield World where the Ur-Didact had been imprisoned in.

"_And the Avatar?_" The IsoDidact asked.

"_The Avatar has been categorized and saved._" The Librarian answered with a smile on her face.

"_Then let us enjoy these last minutes before the key is turned._" The IsoDidact said as he took out his helmet, revealing his young, but grizzled face. He smiled as some tears rolled down from his eyes.

* * *

><p>Present Day_

The Ur-Didact stood alone inside his Cryptum, looking at his hands. "_My life has been unquestionable unjust. The Manipular has ruined the very essence of who I was."
>

The Didact walked out of his Cryptum, overlooking the entire world beneath him. Then he spotted the dropship where his enemies were in. "_I could end them with only a gesture. But the Mantle demands that i should continue with my mission. The Composer must be mine._"

"_Prepare humans, the Didact cometh._"

18. Breaking Quarantine

**Cavern of Discovery, Below Republic City**

* * *

><p>Buck and his squad of highly-trained and highly-experienced ODSTs entered the cavernous entrance to the underground cave beneath the ruined metropolis. Buck had told General Iroh to wait and guard the entrance into the cave that was located inside the Fire Nation Cultural Center.<p>

"So Gunny, you really think that the Flood is really here? This cave looks pretty normal to meâ€¦all dark and rocky." Romeo said as they descended deeper into the cavern.

"What the Rookie and Mickey found just spits out parasite. They've got to be here and better if we exterminate them before they get to the others and the Covenant." Buck replied as he looked around him.

"Have you seen the architecture of this city? Most of it reminds me of New York and Hong Kong back on Earth. Well the old city parts anyway." Mickey said.

"They are really backwards in terms of tech though; they must've taken their sweet time in the Dark Ages." Dutch responded as he loaded his shotgun.

"Hey Buck, I just got word from Corporal Torres in Sergeant Janeway's squad, they got uptown pretty tight." Romeo informed.

"The boys are doing well." Dutch said. "Considering that those Equalists look like inexperienced soldiers, look at their boss, just

looks evil."

"If we Janeway's team got uptown then Svonovich's unit was able to take the sub-urban area too. We better find the Flood before it finds the sewer pipelines." Buck said as they stumbled upon an opened Forerunner gate.

"I think we found the source of the problem." Mickey said as they gazed upon the unlocked gate, and just beyond it were the infected bodies of several miners. "Why didn't they seal off the cave?"

"I think they didâ€¦" Dutch replied as he found several deceased metalbenders and broken metallic barriers. "They didn't stand a chance."

"Hold on, why they aren't infected?!" Romeo pointed out.

"Ambush!" Buck yelled as the bodies of the miners stood up and attacked the ODSTs. Then they heard the way to the entrance cave in. "We're stuck!"

"Shoot those bastards!" Dutch yelled as he emptied his shotgun on the infected miners. Buck shot several of them in the gut with his Assault Rifle and avoided the tendrils of another by rolling down.

Romeo saw that his sniper was useless against the combat forms as the high-caliber bullets passed just straight through them dealing no damage to the infected. He took out his magnum and fired away this time doing some work.

Mickey and the Rookie were helped Dutch bringing down the last of the miners. "That was a close one." Mickey said as he reloaded his SMG.

"We're trapped, now what?" Romeo asked.

"We keep going." Buck replied as he entered the underground Forerunner complex. "Looks like they were looking for something."

The squad walked through the ancient Forerunner hallways until they found traces of the parasite's growth. The walls of metal were being replaced with fleshy corruption. It was growing at a fast rate, what had the researches of this cave found?

"This is getting spooky." Mickey said as they got ready for a surprise attack.

"Stay frosty, check your corners." Buck responded as they began to hear noises coming behind themâ€¦

Then the radio on Dutch's back came to life.

"_This is the UNSC Infinity coming out of the planet's interior, anyone planetside respond for pick-up._"

"Damn, turn that thing off." Romeo said, but it was too late. The nightmarish screams and wails of the combat forms sounded off from all around them.

"Run!" Buck yelled, he and his squad sprinted down through what seemed to be an endless corridor. "Mickey, throw your mines!"

Mickey took out several of his mines and threw them behind him. As they kept making a distance between them and the incoming nightmare, the sound of explosions was heard. "That's not going to keep them for too long!"

"In there!" Buck commanded as they entered through a broken metal door. Once they got inside the bodies of many of the workers hanged from the ceiling, their insides having been ripped away by the combat forms.

"I think I'm going to hurl." Romeo said as he saw the brutal scene before him.

"Looks like they tried to activate that thing over there." Dutch said as he pointed to a green panel on the far right, beneath the command module, the eviscerated corpse of a metalbender lied silently.

"Maybe it's a security panel; Rookie activated it before our friends get here. Now!" Buck ordered.

The Rookie ran towards the panel, he kicked the corpse of the police man away and touched the control panel that looked like a handâ€¦with six fingers.

Then the sound of something unlocking was heard, and the lights returned. The once broken door spawned an energy shield in its absence blocking off the incoming Flood combat forms. They banged and screamed, trying to get inside and kill the ODSTs.

"What happened?" Mickey asked, he was answered with the sound of gunfire coming off from the other side of the energy shield gate. The Flood combat forms turned to look at their attacker, as they did several of them were incinerated on the spot.

The Rookie then saw the control panel be replaced with a holographic sign, saying:

_Defense systems activated: Sentinels dispatched, Enforcer units dispatched, Factories on station, Promethean Sphinx ready for use, Cartographer re-activated, Star-map initialized, terraforming in-progress. The Mantle's Approach ready for use. _

**I. SEE. YOU. RECLAIMER.**

Then the signal died out and the energy gate disappeared. Three Sentinels entered the small corrupted room making the ODSTs quickly aim their weapons on them. The Sentinels began scanning them, after finishing their scan they left the room.

"What the hell!?" Romeo yelled.

"I think we just woke up the entire planet." Buck said as he began to get transmissions from the other ODST units. They were saying that ground split, with massive Forerunner structures coming out of the ground and flying into the air. They also reported that many

Sentinels, of different kinds, began to fly off from the tunnels. "Let's get out of here."

* * *

><p>Outside the Cave, Inside the Fire Nation Cultural Center_

The United Forces soldiers ran out of the building as an earthquake appeared suddenly, violently shaking the ground below them. The street in front of them split, with many of the parked satomobiles falling into the crack.

"Whoaâ€¦" One of the soldiers said in awe as an immense Sentinel Enforcer ascended from the cracked earth, followed by dozens of Sentinels.

"What are those things sir!?" A captain asked the shocked General Iroh as they witnessed the event.

The skies were now covered with grey clouds, the planet's defenses modifying the weather to combat the Flood. Hovering Sentinel factories hovered in the clouds, mass-producing more sentinels to fight against the parasite.

Then from the cavern's entrance, Buck and his ODSTs emerged, covered in red and green blood. They smelled awful, like dead animals or something. "What happened in there?" Iroh asked Buck.

"The entire planet in on alertâ€¦there is something much worse than the Covenant in this world, General." Buck answered, and then the building began to tremble again.

"_**Arrogant creatures! Your deaths will be instantaneous, while we shall suffer the progress of infinitude!**_" The distorted and malignant voice thundered through the wind. The combine troops of ODSTs and United Forces soldiers ran out from the building and watched as one of the hovering Sentinel factories was brought down by the mortar fire of several Covenant Wraith tanks.

Buck quickly turned his personal radio on. "All units head back to the docks now!" Buck ordered. "We have to get out of the city, come on!"

* * *

><p>Inside the planetâ€¦inside the Pelican_

"Something is happening on the surface." Cortana reported.

"What's going on?" Korra asked the AI as they approached the Didact's Cryptum.

"I don't know, but it doesn't sound good. The Covenant battlenet reports that hundreds of Sentinel airborne factories have risen up from the earth and the quarantine zone has been initiated on top of the planet's surface." Cortana answered.

"Does the Didact know?" The Chief asked. The question was answered as

the Didact's ship propelled itself downward, entering a much bigger structure.

The Covenant Liches and battlecruisers began to rally close to the exit of the inside of Requiem. The massive structure began to come out of the ground; it was actually a gigantic ship.

"The Didact's leaving!" Korra yelled, the Master Chief piloted the Pelican into a nearby Covenant CAS-class Battlecruiser.

"We are boarding the Covenant ship, hold on." The Master Chief said as he rammed the Pelican into the cruiser's hangar, killing several Covenant soldiers. They jumped out of the Pelican, and took out the stragglers.

"Reinforcements are coming; we better head to the bridge." Cortana said.

19. The 100,000 Years War

**Republic City**

* * *

><p>The UNSC Infinity could be seen on the planet's skies as the Sentinel Factories hovered like dark clouds. Pelicans landed next to the makeshift base of the United Forces; there several Marines gave the soldiers of the United Forces several weapons and equipment. Commander Lasky had convinced Captain Del Rio that if they were going to leave they might as well give enough weapons to the locals to defend themselves.<p>

Mako, Asami and Bolin came out of one of the pelican. They were heading towards the Metalbending camp when they saw a familiar figure approach them. "Hope that y'all liked the ship."

"It's that youâ€¦Tom?" Mako asked the Spartan-IV in dark grey armor.

"It's me all right, Tom-B292." Tom replied as he shook Mako's hand. "Good to see you all again, hold on, where's the tribe girl at?"

"She is with the Master Chief." Bolin answered. Tom scratched the top of his helmet.

"Hmmâ€¦anyway, there are several things you three should know. The Infinity is leaving soon and I have to get going with my squad but the Corps will be leaving some guns for y'all. Stay within the city's perimeter since it's been cleared of Covenant alright?" The trio nodded.

Before leaving, the Spartan-IV took off his technological advanced helmet and walked in front of Asami. He grabbed her hand and kissed it in a gentlemanly manner. "I don't anything bad to happen." He said, his black hair and pale skin made him look like a firebender.

Another Spartan walked towards them. "Hurry up Tom, we got to

go."

"I know Lucy, I'll be there." Tom replied. "Good meeting y'all." The Spartan IVs left to their pelican and headed off towards the massive orbiting ship.

"A Star-Lord just kissed your hand!" Bolin excitingly yelled as he pointed at Asami's right hand. Asami looked at it and just smiled.

A group of black armored Marines walked passed them. They were covered in greenish red blood and were dirtier than a mole rat. "Do we have to leave them Gunny? I think that the captain just lost a bolt." Mickey said as they headed towards the pelicans.

"Orders are orders Mickey." Buck replied as he took off his helmet and sighed.

"But we can't just leave them to their deaths; they are as human as we are." Dutch supported Mickey.

"We left them weapons; let them fight on their own." Romeo said.

"Now that's just cold Romeo." Mickey responded.

"I'm not saying they deserve it, they are not UNSC, why should we care?" Romeo asked. Buck turned to them.

"I don't want to leave, especially for what we just found inside that cave. But I can't jeopardize your lives for not following the captain's orders." Buck said. "If we could convince him thatâ€¦"

"The Master Chief didn't follow orders." Mako said to the older man as he walked towards the ODSTs.

"Get outta here kid, men are talking." Romeo brushed him off, making Dutch elbows him in the ribs. "Ouch man."

"What did the Chief do again?" Dutch asked.

"He told off the captain and just went ahead with his own plan." Bolin replied. "He left with our friend, the Avatar."

"So that's who the soldiers were talking about." Mickey said.

"Gunny, what Chief sounds right, we have to stop whatever is going on here. You know it!" Dutch stated, Buck was in deep thought.

"What's going on?" Mako asked.

"Something bad was buried here along with the Didact, something equally as badâ€¦maybe even worse. If we don't stop it hereâ€¦we might as well say goodbye to all the lives in the galaxy." Buck answered. "And that is why we're staying."

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's

Orbit_

The Arbiter and his Spec Ops Elites slowly proceeded through the infected corridors of the human station. It appeared that the humans had discovered something on the ring and had brought it back to the station. The Arbiter entered what it seemed to be a communications terminal room; several dead army troopers littered the corners with Flood growth around them.

The Elites guarded the entrance towards the terminal room while the Arbiter found out what did the humans brought over to the station. Records showed that they had been communicating back to Earth and had been sending reports.

They had unearthed several Forerunner glyphs and technologies for analysis. But it was the last thing that they had found that was the most peculiar. According from the glyphs on it, the device was called the Composer.

The Composer? The Arbiter had never heard about such thing, but he wasn't surprised that the ancients had built such device.

"Arbiter!" One of the Elites called out.

"What is it?" The Arbiter replied.

"Radio signals, from the lower decks." The Elite answered. The Arbiter nodded and left the terminal room and headed towards the lower decks. But after he left, the monitor of the comm unit began flashing and the symbol of the Didact appeared as it became unbound.

* * *

><p>Mo Ce Sea, Beyond Republic City_

The waters of the ocean split open, a massive thunderstorm formed on the skies. Covenant ships began to pour out of the opened ocean floor and into the outside of the shield world. The skies were filled with several Sentinel Factories.

As the Didact's ship, the Mantle's Approach came out with all of its ancient glory. It ripped through the dark clouds, lightning bolts hit it but the Forerunner metal didn't even react to it.

The Didact, the ancient god of war, looked on inside his ship's bridge surrounded by his Promethean Knights. He looked on the inclement weather outside, Requiem's defense systems had been activatedâ€¦that meant only one thing.

"_The Ancient Foe has been released once more to lay ruin onto the galaxy and the universe. I cannot allow that to happen._" The Didact said as he turned to his Promethean Knights. "_Commence the cleansing of all the continents of the shield world; I can feel the Parasite already sprawling in several human cities around the globe._"

The Knights acknowledged his orders and teleported away. The Didact turned to look into the horizon, the Covenant floating around the Mantle's Approach. "_The war continues and I am the sole combatant against the ancient evil._"

A handful of CCS-class battlecruisers separated from the Didact's fleet and went on different directions.

The Master Chief and Korra, who had taken over one of the cruiser's systems and bridge, hovered over what seemed to be one of the islands off the United Republic's territory.

"Look! Some of the ships are leaving." Korra pointed out.

"The Didactâ€¦his ordering a cleansing! That means that theâ€¦" Cortana said but she stopped herself from finishing the sentence.

"The Flood." The Master Chief ended the sentence. "The Didact knows of this, he plans to eradicate the Flood."

"The Flood?" Korra asked. "You mean the Parasite in the Librarian's vision? It can't be!"

"If we don't stop the Didact, he will kill everyone to exterminate the Flood!" Cortana said as she maneuvered the massive Covenant cruiser towards the United Republic.

"What about the Flood?" The Chief asked.

"Iâ€¦I don't know." Cortana replied. "Once we stop the Didact, we can come up with something."

"But...but the Flood can infect entire cities in hours!" Korra yelled. "We have to stop both!"

"One thing at a time, Korra. The Didact is the most immediate threat at the moment; once we defeat him we will stop the Flood." The Master Chief said, calming Korra a little bit.

"Fine. Where are we going?" She asked.

"Towards the biggest of the ships, the flagship Covenant shipâ€¦an Assault Carrier. The Shining Paladin." Cortana replied, the battlecruiser they were in quickly accelerated.

* * *

><p>The Sentinel Factories that hovered above opened, and thousands of sentinels began to pour out of them. In the Earth Kingdom city of Wung Shi, the earth began to shake violently. Through the pits and caves surrounding the city, the wicked parasite began to appear. Hundreds of infection forms sieged the city, at first the earthbenders easily held them off.<p>

That is until one of them got infected, the city fell into chaos. The Sentinels then quickly arrived, as well as one of the Covenant battlecruisers. The Covenant foolishly sent down troops to take out the infection but they were met with the same fate.

Infected Elites within their vehicles shot one of the Sentinel Factories down into the earth. The Covenant battlecruiser was caught by the falling factory and was severely damaged. Promethean Knights were sent down to finish the job, but the Flood combat forms

outnumbered the metallic Knights.

The same scene was repeated in several cities across the five nations. The weather was quickly changed by the Sentinel Enforces, with even the hottest area of the world falling into cold temperatures.

Snow began to fall, even in the warm Fire Nation and in the deserts of the Earth Kingdom. The only nation holding itself together was, ironically, the Water Tribes.

* * *

><p>Republic City_

The Infinity left the planet, leaving Buck's team behind. "Alright, we stayed know what?" Romeo asked as he sat next to one of the injured United Forces soldiers.

"What we do is to establish a clear cleaning group to search out for the Flood and destroy them. We still don't know if the cave was the only part of the city that was infected." Buck responded as he looked into his Tac-Pad on his left wrist. "While we do that we can show these guys how to use a rifle."

"I can do that, it's always nice to share some of my tricks." Dutch volunteered.

"Good, the rest of you can head of to the barracks and take a breather." Buck ordered, The Rookie, Mickey and Romeo left to rest while Buck stayed to look at his Tac-Pad reports. He was going to be probably court marshaled for this but he knew he was doing the right thing.

"Tough choice huh?" General Iroh said as he sat next to the tired gunnery sergeant.

"You bet." Buck replied as he sighed once more. "Where are those Equalist people at?"

"Trading supplies with the remaining citizens to defend themselves in case more of those Covenant show up." Iroh said. "Things are going from bad to worse."

"Last time something like this happened, half of a continent was glassed. I just hope it doesn't come to that extreme." Buck said, then he noticed a snowflake falling on his armored arm.
"Huh?"

"Snow? In the middle of the year?" Iroh asked himself as he looked to the grey clouds ahead, with the Sentinel Factories hovering above them.

"Strangeâ€¦" Buck said, it began to snow more and more. "Let's get inside one of the buildings."

Mako and Bolin entered one of the command buildings, there Tenzin, Tarrlok and Lin were talking with several United Forces officers. Commander Bumi was present there also. "Hey bro, this is crazy, we're supposed to be with Korra right now." Bolin told his brother.

"You don't think I want to be with her right now? We would be dragging her down." Mako responded as he crossed his arms. "We are more useful here with Tenzin and the others, especially now that the space soldiers left."

"I have feeling they're going to come back." Bolin said as he looked at the officers trying to come up with some kind of explanation to what was going on.

* * *

><p>The Mantle's Approach_

"_Eradicate the infection, I cannot allow the Parasite to take over my world!_" The Didact yelled at the Covenant through his ship. The simple sound of an angry ancient made the Covenant tremble and quickly followed his commands.

The Didact couldn't leave Requiem for the Composer with the Flood running rampant on its surface. If they entered inside, it was all lost. He knew that the Lifeworkers had stored multiple infection samples within Requiem, but it seemed that human digging had tempered with them. And with enough underground complexes being tempered with, more and more parasites had been released. Some dormant but othersâ€¦

* * *

><p>Hu Xing Provinces, Northern United Republic_

The assault carrier, the Shining Paladin, had stopped over one of the cities of the Hu Xing Provinces. The city had been completely lost to the Flood, and they were attacking the massive vessel.

The Master Chief and Korra, within a battlecruiser, arrived to see the Covenant bombardment of the city. It was too close to the city's skyscrapers and many Flood controlled airplanes were diving into the assault carrier's hangars.

"The battlenet informs that many of the Covenant inside the carrier are holding off the Flood from reaching the bridge and the engineering areas of the ship." Cortana informed. "If they fail, the Flood could spread quicker through the planet."

"We can't allow that to happen." The Master Chief said. "We have to destroy the carrier."

"We don't have the firepower." Cortana replied.

"We got the mass." The Chief replied. "Cortana, set this ship into a direct course towards the cruiser, and get one of the Phantoms in the hangar ready for lift off."

"On it." Cortana acknowledged.

"You come up with the craziest plans, you know that?" Korra said to the Chief.

"I've been told. Now come on." The Chief responded as they headed quickly towards the hangar. The cruiser approached the carrier really fast; a single Phantom was seen flying off the cruiser as the massive ship approached the other.

And seconds after it escaped, the cruiser rammed into the assault carrier, exploding in one huge explosion that engulfed the area around the city. "Whoaâ€¦" It was the only thing Korra could say as the explosion shook the retreating Phantom they were in. "Now what?"

"With the carrier gone the chances of planetary infection have been reduced butâ€¦there are more." Cortana responded. "Hold onâ€¦the battlenet lost contact with one of their cruisers, wait, make that two, no waitâ€¦make that three."

"What?" The Chief asked.

"It can't be." Korra said as they headed towards the Didact's ship. It seemed that the infected Covenant ships were attacking the Mantle's Approach and the uninfected ships. "Their main target is the Didact!"

"He's leaving again!" Cortana yelled.

"Not without us, hold on!" The Chief shouted as he quickly drove the Phantom towards the Mantle's Approach.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's Orbit_

The Parasite! It had come from the ring and into the station through the cargo shipments. They had appeared from the lowest depths of the station, were a possible Proto-Gravemind was being made, to attack the Arbiter and his mighty Spec Ops. The Flood knew that they were there to save the still living humans but they wouldn't allow them.

"Keep heading towards the location of the humans!" The Arbiter shouted as they were being chased by dozens of combat forms through the tight corridors of the lower levels of the station.

They arrived into a closed gate. "Dead end." One of the Spec Ops said as the lights around the gate turned green and opened. Allowing them inside.

Inside the room they were met by several UNSC Army troopers and some scientists. "They're friendlies, seal the door!" A trooper yelled, the gate closed again followed by a haunting Flood scream.

"You hid here?" The Arbiter asked the army troopers.

"Yeah, we still don't know how they even got in here and why they haven't used the ventilation shafts to enter." The soldier replied.

"How did you know we were in distress?" One of the scientists asked, an older woman with light brown hair.

"We intercepted your distress beacon to Earth, it never made it." A Spec Ops Elite answered.

"The Parasite hijacked one of your cargo vessels and spread in here, I also saw that you have gained an artifact of great importance." The Arbiter said as he pointed his Elites towards the gate once more as the Flood banged on it.

"Howâ€¦how did you know?" The woman asked.

"It does not matter; the Parasite is here because of it aside from spreading." The Arbiter responded. "We must eliminate the Parasite, now, or they will eventually get into this room."

"Arbiter!"

"What is it?"

"The human alarm has gone off!"

The alarms of the station had gone off, they only sounded if external threats, like Insurrectionist or Covenant Remnant ships entered the area.

"Shit!" The sergeant of the army troopers cursed.

"The traitors have arrived!" The Arbiter said as he took out his energy sword. "A great battle is upon us."

20. Once More, With Feeling

**Installation 03's Orbit**

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><p>The slipspace portal opened and the massive ship of the Didact, and a small fleet of Covenant ships exited the portal. A small phantom dropship followed one of the cruisers out of the portal, staying within its shields.<p>

"Why did the Didact leave so suddenly?!" Korra asked. The monitor of the phantom turned on showing the cracked planet with a ring of rocks orbiting closely to it. "Whoaâ€¦"

"He most likely panicked once the ships were being brought down by the Flood and decided to get the Composer." Cortana said as she flew the phantom as closely as possible to the nearby cruiser without being detected.

"Is thatâ€¦" Then one of the things that started it allâ€¦ "Is that a Halo?" Chief asked as he saw the ring, with the Mantle's Approach flying close to it. "Why are they bypassing it?"

"Because the Composer is not ON the ring." Cortana replied, with Ivanoff Station becoming visible.

"Then let's go to that thing on the big rock and get that Composer thing." Korra stated as she pointed towards Ivanoff Station.

* * *

><p>The Mantle's Approach_

The Didact looked at the shadow of the Halo ring; it was as if it spoke to him. The mighty Forerunner Warrior-Servant felt the presence of the ancient enemy trying to enter his mind again, to play tricks with his thoughts.

"_We are all here; it is fitting for this 100,000 Year War to come to an end this day._" The Didact said, many of the smaller Covenant ships were being attacked by the Flood-infested defenses of the station, like Broadswords and Longswords. "_You have finally awoken once more to finish what you once started, long ago in a much different galaxy, Parasite._"

The Didact turned towards his Promethean Knights and with a wave of his hand, they all roared in obedience. "_Cleanse the infection within the human station, and secure the Composer._"

They teleported away, leaving the mighty Didact alone to command the fleet.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station_

The Arbiter led a group of Elite Spec Ops, Army Troopers and a handful of scientists through the corrupted hallways of the station. It seemed that the Flood had focused most of its forces on the invading Storm Covenant fleet outside.

"Stay close humans, it is easy to get lost within this infected labyrinth." The Arbiter said the lights flickered; the mangled bodies of the security forces within the station littered the corners of every room. From what it looked like, the Flood were still massing bodies, trying to make a Gravemind inside the walls of the station.

"This isâ€¦is disgusting." One of the scientists said trying not vomit from the stench of the rotting corpses.

"Exit to the top floor is just some rooms away." An Army trooper informed, they moved slowly checking every corner. The station shook from the heavy battle taking place outside of the station with the Storm Covenant.

They were near the exit but stopped when they detected several Flood combat forms walking around aimlessly through the steel corridors. "Parasites." A Spec Ops Elite said as they hid behind some crates and the corner of the walls. "No way through without making every other combat form around come running at us."

"What do we do?" One of the Army troopers asked as he readied his Assault Rifle. The Arbiter then ignited his energy sword.

"Stealth." The Arbiter responded, going into active camouflage becoming a ghost in the mist. In a second, he swiftly took out four combat forms stealthily with his energy sword. He was quiet enough

that he hadn't even alerted them while he eviscerated them. "We move now before more show up."

The Elites and humans nodded their heads in agreement and followed the Arbiter.

* * *

><p>Republic City_

Buck and his team moved through the rubbles of the heart of Republic City, they were being accompanied by Amon and his Equalists and some United Forces soldiers. With them, Commander Bumi was to command the United Forces and keep an eye on Amon.

"Nothing but ashes." Dutch said as he looked around on top of a hill of concrete. "What are we supposed to find out here anyway?"

"Remember when we were inside that room in the cave? We have to find another entrance into the cave and de-activate the defenses of the planet." Buck replied, the Rookie and Mickey found several bodies beneath the rubble.

"This is a waste of time, Sergeant. The only thing we should do is rally everyone and liberate the other cities." Amon said as he walked beside Buck.

"And you are the one capable of doing so?" Buck asked the masked man.

"Yes I am, the benders in charged have done nothing but bring ruin to the non-benders of the city before the attack of the Beasts. Now they don't even try to evacuate their own people, they don't deserve their roles." Amon responded.

"This isn't time for politics; if we don't bring those things on the sky they will keep bombarding the hell out of the planet's surface." Buck told the revolutionary leader, losing his cool for a minute. He has seen the horrors of the Insurrection; he didn't want to deal with rebels of any kind again.

"I thought you would understand, without having wicked supernatural powers like the benders, but you act just like them. This isn't over, space man." Amon said as he walked away from Buck and the other ODSTs.

"Charming." Romeo stated. "I would rather stay back on base and think this over."

"What's there to think? We either do something or let this planet go down south." Mickey said, cleaning his dirty hands on the Rookie's armor.

"We keep going until we hit something, either more wounded or lost Covie units." Buck said as he kept walking forward. Sentinels floated over the derelict skyscrapers, going into battle.

"Hey Commander, what's your pick on all of this?" Mickey asked Bumi as they walked together.

"A bunch of wacky things after another, first those split-jaws come out of nowhere then you people pop in and then metal men invade the skies! Weird." Bumi replied wiggling his arms over his head. "And to think I planned to retire."

"I had it worse; I had to fight in a history defining battle to save an entire city on my birthday." Mickey said remembering the Battle of Earth, how they barely got out of New Mombasa before it was glassed by the Covenant, one hell of a birthday party.

"Tell me something kiddo, why do your people look so different yet so like us?" Bumi asked Mickey, scratching his head.

"Uh to tell you the truth I have no idea." Mickey responded, realizing that these people were at least centuries technologically behind them. It was amazing that they had survived this long against the Storm Covenant. "We come from Earth, that's our home."

"Earthâ€¦sounds like a good vacation spot." Bumi replied with a smile.

An explosion was heard nearby, making everyone drop on the ground. Buck used his visor to expand his view; the sound of the explosion had come from the streets ahead. "I don't see anything." Buck said.

"Look." Dutch pointed at the sky. Wraith mortar shots struck some of the Sentinel Factories above, making them fall on the city. "Covenant?"

"I hope so, Dutch." Buck replied as he stood up. "Must've been a lost shot by one of the Wraiths, let's go and take care of whatever is commanding them."

They moved through the destroyed city until they came up to a plaza, there were at most ten Wraiths shooting at the sky. "Looks like Covies to me." Romeo said while looking through the scope of his sniper.

"Look again sniper." Buck responded, on the pilot hatch of the Wraiths there were Flood corruption on it. "Floodâ€¦but where is the Covenant?"

"I think they got the worse end of the stick Gunny." Dutch said he had found the ripped bodies of some Grunts and Jackals. "Took the Elites and the vehicles."

"Then we take them, earthbenders prepare to flip those tanks, firebenders when the way is clear fry the pilots and waterbenders, slice and dice any survivors. Remember these are not people any more nor are they Beasts anymore. Understood?" Buck asked.

"What about us?" Amon asked.

"Support the soldiers in any way you can." Buck ordered earning a glare from Amon. The rebel leader reluctantly acknowledge and went back to his group.

"Let's go!" Buck yelled leading the joint-group out of their hiding spots and into the fray. The earthbenders quickly acted and used the earth beneath the Wraiths to flip them over as fast as they could. The firebenders shot lightning at the still standing Wraiths, short-circuiting the tanks. The waterbenders cut through the Flood infantry protecting the Wraiths, with the support of Buck's squad and the Equalists.

It looked like they had the upper hand until. "The windows!" Bumi yelled, from the surrounding buildings dozens of combat forms jumped out of the windows and into the plaza surrounding the joint-group of soldiers.

"Fallback!" Buck ordered, but their exit way had been blocked by more combat forms, now accompanied by carrier forms.

"They got carriers!" Romeo informed.

"Watch the little bastards!" Dutch added, they kept firing on the coming Flood units. Some of the United Forces soldiers and Equalists were being infected by the infection forms popping out of the carriers. They were being packed into the middle of the plaza, Amon couldn't just keep himself alive with just a electric glove and a dagger he had to do it if he had to survive.

These things had liquid inside of them, he could feel it. Amon raised his hand and prepared but before he could do anything, Sentinels flew down from the sky and began shooting at the Flood. The combat forms began retreating when a gigantic Sentinel Enforcer flew down and started to fire at them.

The Sentinels ignored the humans and focused their power on the combat forms, burning them with their highly advanced Forerunner weaponry. The survivors sighed at the sight of their saviors, Bumi sat on the ground tired. "Spirits that was one for the history books. I'll call it, Commander Bumi's Heroic Stand Against the Parasitic Horror!" Bumi proudly said.

"What can I say? It was one hell of a day." Buck said, some more United Forces came from the streets they had originally come from now led by Tenzin.

"What happened? Are you all right?" Tenzin asked his older brother, helping him stand up.

"You wouldn't believe what just happened." Bumi replied. Buck looked at his armor; it had been bathed in reddish green slimy Flood liquid.

"Ughâ€¦not this again." Buck said. "Come on, let's go back to base." The group and their late reinforcements then made their way back to base; the Sentinels were now swooping through the city. Hopefully making their job a little bit easier.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station_

Cortana drove the phantom towards one of the docks of the station. "We should be on a safe distance from the ships." Cortana said.

"Signal."

"Patch it through." Chief said.

"Hello?! Is anyone friendly out there?!" The voice of a female was heard.

"This is Spartan-117 ready to assist." Chief responded.

"Thank God! We need help, we have made out way into the science wing and we are surrounded by Flood!" The woman informed them. "Luckily we were helped by the Arbiter and his Elites."

"The Arbiter? But there are no friendly Elite fleets out here." Cortana said. "They must've left the system once they saw the Didact's ship exiting slipspaceâ€¦but leaving the Arbiter like thisâ€¦it doesn't make sense."

"We are nearly there, hold on tight." The Chief told the woman on the other side of the signal.

"Do it quickly we nee..." The signal broke.

"What's going on?" Korra asked as she saw the panels in from of her blinking red in the Sangheilli language.

"Cortana correct your course!" Chief yelled as he saw that Cortana was too blinking in different colors, her rampancy showing up again.

"Ttttthhheee coiiiinâ€¦.its theee coiinss faulttt!" She yelled in a disturbed digitalized voice.

"What's happening to her?!" Korra asked, the phantom was heading directly into the hangar and not slowing down.

"Cortana!" Chief yelled again, but Cortana was not snapping out. He acted quickly knowing that the crash would kill Korra, he grabbed her and protected her with his armored body as the Phantom crashed into the hangar.

21. Sanctified

**Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's Orbit**

* * *

><p>"I am so sorryâ€¦Iâ€¦" The Master Chief could hear Cortana's voice as he regained consciousness. His armor had caught much of the impact, with parts of the titanium plates getting their paint scratched. The SPARTAN-II then remembered that he had protected Korra with his bodyâ€¦<p>

She was unconscious, laying a few feet away from him. The crash must've made her body fly towards the metallic wall. The Chief quickly went to her to see if she was still alive. Cortana kept sobbing inside his head; he ignored her sounds and focused on Korra. His visor scanned her body, several cuts and bruises.

"She's going to be fine." The Chief stated calming Cortana, he carried the young Avatar. Then the radio started to go alive again.

"Are you alive!? Please respond!" It was the same woman calling for assistance again.

"This is Spartan-117, everything all right?" The Chief responded.

"Oh my God, I thought that something horrible must've happened when I lost your signal."

"What's your position?" The Chief asked.

"We're holed up in the science wing, please come help!"

"On my way." The Chief then turned the comm link off, and looked around the room they were in. It looked like a laboratory. That meant that he wasn't that far away from the rest. "Cortana, give the location of the person that contacted us."

"Uhâ€¦on it, her name is Dr. Sandra Tillson and she isâ€¦here!" A NAV point then appeared on the Chief's HUD.

"Thanksâ€¦Cortana." The Chief replied as he went for the door while carrying Korra. As he stepped into the hallway, he saw that the station had seen better days. Blood and guts littered on the metallic floor of the rooms.

This wasn't good, the Covenant were not known to do this in battle. When the Chief entered the next hallway his suspicions were confirmed. The Flood had infested the station. "Oh noâ€¦" Cortana said. "This is why the Arbiter came in the first placeâ€¦"

"We have to hurry; the doctor and the others will be caught in the middle between the Covenant and the Flood." The Chief told Cortana, he ran through the hallways towards the NAV point, wanting to evade any Flood for Korra's sake.

He could hear the gargling sounds of the combat forms coming out of their hiding places and hurling themselves at the Master Chief. Tentacles and spikes struck his armored body, his shields brightening and breaking each time one connected. But he kept going, ramming if necessary, through this infinite devil machine. Once he got as close to the objective he was caught by an Elite combat form. It landed on his back, making the Chief to drop Korra in front of him.

The infected beast roared at him, the SPARTAN struck it on its face or whatever it was, knocking it away. He tried to stand up and Korra to safety but was once again whipped into the metallic floor, his shields breaking at contact. The Chief was then surrounded by a handful of human combat forms; he reacted like any SPARTAN would. Faster than a blink of an eye, the Master Chief jumped onto his feet, grabbed two of the combat forms and hurled them with all his might towards the Elite combat form that had attacked him before.

Then with his fists he struck the other three human combat forms, punching through their rotted insides and ripping them apart. He quickly took out his Assault Rifle and fired at the incoming targets,

they dropped like flies as they approached the SPARTAN with lightning speed. He ran out of bullets and switched to his Magnum, making more fall with deadly aim.

The Chief walked backwards as he fired, getting near to Korra, to ensure her safety. But it looked like he was going to be swarmed soon enough. Then the gate behind them opened and the massive form of an Elite cladded in ancient armor came from behind them, wielding dual plasma rifles. It was the legendary Arbiter, firing with fury at the corrupted Storm Elites and former scientists of the station. "Get in Spartan!" He yelled, the Chief grabbed Korra and carried her inside. Soon enough the Arbiter followed them and sealed the gate after they entered leaving the nightmare awayâ€¦for now.

Inside the room was a group of UNSC Army troopers accompanying a handful of scientists from the science team and the Arbiter's Special Operations Elites. "Oh thank goodness you arrive." It was Dr. Tillson, the Chief could recognize her voice. "Is she going to be okay?"

Korra was still unconscious on the Chief's arms, "She will be fine." The Chief replied handling her over to a nearby Army trooper and putting her on top of a desk as a makeshift bed. One of the troopers, probably a medic, began to check on her.

"It is good to see you again Spartan." The Arbiter said as he stood next to the Master Chief once more, they hadn't been together since the Battle of Installation 00â€¦or the Ark.

"What's happening outside?" Tillson asked, making everyone look on the Chief for answers.

"It's the Covenantâ€¦they are being led by a Forerunner." The Chief answered, taking everyone by surprise.

"Impossible!" One of the Elites responded. The Arbiter quickly calmed him.

"But the Forerunners, they banished long ago, how is that indeed possible?" The Arbiter asked.

"This Forerunner is called the Didact, he is according to the Elites under his command the Covenant God of War. He survived by being imprisoned inside a shield worldâ€¦that girl's home planet." Cortana answered through the Chief's speakers.

"You're joking right?" One of the troopers said unbelieving the story.

"That would explain this." The medic added, the Chief and the Arbiter went to see what the doc had discovered. "This young woman has more activity going in her cerebral cortex than the average human being, comparable to that of a math magician or a rocket scientist."

"But she looks soâ€¦trivial." Dr. Tillson said. "Explain doctor."

"If the equipment is right, this means that she is higher in the evolution ladder than most of us." The medic replied looking at his med-pad. "A little bit like yours, Spartan."

"I am afraid that there's more bad news." Cortana said. "The Didact wants the device housed in this station, the Composer, back."

"How do you know about that?" Tillson asked. "That's classified informationâ€¦" The sounds of the growling Flood behind the gates could be heard as the station rumbled.

* * *

><p>Somewhere Elseâ€¦_

Korra found herself lying on top of a grassy field, surrounded by nothing but the breeze of an early morning. She stood up and looked around, nothing but plains with the occasional tree in the distance. Nothing but silence.

"Chief!" She yelled but no one replied back. "Chief!" She yelled once more, but nothing once more.

A bit terrified and little bit curious, the Avatar began to walk through the grassy field. The skies were light blue and clouds hovered above. Wherever she was, it wasn't her home or the coldness of outer space. It felt serene and peaceful, but as the Avatar, Korra could feel something in the air. Something that only someone with the Avatar Spirit could sense.

"_A new Avatar finally comes through the barrier that separates the material and immaterial worlds._"

"Who's there?" Korra asked, quickly taking a battle stance.

"_You, that's who's there._" Then in front of her a tall and robust man appeared. He looked a lot like her father but had white markings on his face and he wore what it seemed some type of black body suit. "_I am Avatar Forthencho, and I am here to greet you._"

"The Lord of Admiralsâ€¦" Korra said in awe.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station_

"We discovered that Forerunner device on the ring, it took us months and the biggest UNSC ship just to move it here." Tillson said as she looked at the recovered Forerunner glyphs inside containment tubes. "We did everything to prevent contamination; we didn't even explore the deeper layers of the ring."

"A single spore is all it's needed for the Flood to overrun." The Arbiter said surely, having seen it first hand before.

The Chief looked at Tillson again. "Can you give Cortana access to the station's supply manifest from here?"

"What for?"

"If we can't move the Composer, we have to make sure the Didact doesn't either." Tillson was shocked from what the Chief said.

"Waitâ€¦we have years of work invested here." Tillson replied.

"Inventory lists seven excavation-grade HAVOK mines; just one of those would turn this base into a piÃ±ata." Cortana informed.

"That would cleanse this system from both the traitors and the Parasite." The Arbiter added.

"I'm sorry doctor. Arbiter, can you lead these people to the nearest evac shuttle?" Chief asked his old companion.

"I will." The Arbiter replied.

"Once we take care of the Composer, you won't have much time." The Chief told everyone.

"Controls are fried; we can't do anything from here." One of the troopers informed. The squad leader looked at the Master Chief.

"We'll take care of priming those nukes for you Chief; you just make sure the Covenant doesn't get to the Composer." The Army Trooper Leader said, he turned to squadmates and exited from the other side of the room.

The Chief and the Arbiter looked at each other and nodded, they would work together once more. "Brothers, remain here and protect the humans." Arbiter ordered his Spec Ops, they roared in agreement. "Let's go Spartan."

"Maybe next time you rescue usâ€¦you can give us more time to pack?" Tillson asked, still not believing what was going on.

"Next time." The Chief replied, leaving the room with the Arbiter.

* * *

><p>Somewhere Elseâ€¦_

"That means I'm in the Spirit World?" Korra asked while looking at the Lord of Admirals himself.

"_Indeed you are young one; this is the realm that my people, your people would believe they would arrive in after death._" Forthencho answered. "_But what you see before you it's but a shadow of what Avatar Forthencho once was, most of me was composed long ago._"

"You got composed?" Korra asked.

"_If I had been completely composed, the Avatar Cycle would've ended with me, but before I met my fate, I closed my eyes and allowed my spirit to exit my physical body._" Forthencho explained. "_The Didact got what he wanted, the memories of his greatest foe achieved forever within the Composer but he did not gain my spirit. I come to you, my latest incarnation, to give you the greatest advice I can hand over to the Avatar that will face the coming darkness, the one who would harbinger a new era of change._"

"Whatâ€¦" Korra tried to understand.

"_The only way that the enemies that come ahead can be defeated is through the power of the Avatar, no weapon shall be able to harm them. It is your spirit that its strongest, none shall oppose you Avatar Korra for you wield the power of those came before you. End this 100,000 Year War._"

Forthencho then began to glow bright, his spirit then disappearing into the air. Korra looked around again, the Spirit World becoming a lot less bright and a lot darker.

"_**While one child sits on his throne so mighty with his zealots doing his bidding, the other moves for the kill.**_" It was the same wicked voice from Korra's nightmare.

"What are you!?" Korra yelled at the disembodied voice.

"_**I? I am a monument to all your sins.**_"

22. Final Run

Thanks for all the reviews for this fic! Happy New Years everyone!

* * *

><p>"This is it, the Covenant is at our doorstep folks and there is only two things we can doâ€¦we can fight or die."<p>

Explosions were heard as the Covenant Storm ships returned to the star system and began to use plasma bombardments against the planet's outer surface. Sentinel Factories fell from the skies and Flood infected encampments were being exterminated by larger and more powerful Covenant Strike Teams.

The United Forces sieged the outer perimeter of each city within the republic, accompanied by Earth Kingdom reinforcements from the east. But more and more Covenant units fell from the cruisers above, Elites wielding Energy Swords and cladded in heavy armor. This was itâ€¦this was the Final Run.

* * *

><p>Republic City, Requiemâ€¦

3:45 AM Local Time, July 2557 UNSC Calendar, 170 ASC Local Calendar

If there was anything still left standing in the city, it was all flatten by now. Covenant Storm units consisting of Storm Elites, Jackals and Grunts entered the once great metropolis and exterminated all and all Flood infection forms within the caverns below the city with plasma bombs and raiding teams.

But at 2:30 AM Local Time, the Joint UNSC/United Forces team from the coast re-entered the inner city pushing the Covenant back to the mountains with sheer force and unexpected attacks from both front and back. It was 3:45 AM now, and a Covenant battlecruiser had entered

from slipspace over Yue Bay. Most of the non-military personnel both non-essential personnel and the citizen body of the city had been evacuated thanks to Earth Kingdom Military coming into the city after hours of wait.

Gunnery Sergeant Edward Buck, the local UNSC non-commissioned officer in-charge had summoned a tactical meeting to discuss what they should do now that the Covenant had come back in full force.

"All right people, we have a storm on our hands and there is little time we have so let's come up with something." Buck said starting the meeting, his ODST armor having seen better days but it was as functional as ever.

"The battalions of United Forces ships have concentrated their assault over at the Fire Nation islands out west in the Mo Ce Sea meaning that this Covenant cruiser above our heads is just here for re-assessment." General Iroh of the United Forces said pointing at the Fire Nation islands on the map.

"Meaning?" One of the ODSTs asked.

"Meaning that we will probably have about a dozen of Covenant units dropping down in the next two hours or sooner." General Iroh replied.

"Then we hit them deep and hard when they come down to play." Commander Bumi stated.

"That's not a very good idea." Buck responded. "They will kill us with a few plasma charges if we even show our heads out of the ground."

"Then?" Mako asked as he entered the room, getting some funny looks from the ODSTs behind Buck. "We stay here and suck on our thumbs?"

"Why didn't you leave with the other non-essential personnel?" Butch asked.

"Because I won't seat on my hands while you do all the work, the person I care most about is right now in space fighting the most powerful being in the universe. I won't seat idle knowing that." Mako responded.

"Kid's got a point Gunny, we can't stay down here." Dutch added. "I mean, we have been using guerrilla warfare with these guys, it hasn't stop them from coming back to finish the job."

"What do you suggest General?" Tenzin asked General Iroh, he was of two remaining heads of state left.

"We get our things and leave the city." General Iroh said. "Like Sergeant Buck said, we have no chances here but once we rendezvous with the 34th Naval Regiment up north we can retake anything we left behind."

"They haven't glassed anything yet so it might work." Mickey added. "And besides we have something they don't have."

Then a Sentinel floated inside the meeting room, it hovered next to the ODST. "We have these bad boys."

"Are you sure we can rely on these machines?" Tarrlok asked, finally speaking.

"We trusted the Equalist for this long, and the Sentinels seem to carry out orders soâ€¦" Buck began thinking. "I have a plan."

* * *

><p>4:50 AM Local Time

The city streets were silent with only the humming of the Covenant battlecruiser above being the only source of sound. Sounds of battle and explosions could be heard over the horizon, with the ominous shape of a Covenant Assault Carrier glooming over the black night clouds.

Through the rubble a person ran through an intersection, then it looked off the cornerâ€¦and then it waved its hand telling more to follow. Buck moved slowly through the streets of Republic City, he was to meet with the other teams in the Roku District in the north. It was the city's limits, the plan was on the go and the only thing between them and reinforcements was a whole city.

"Area's clean, let's keep moving." Buck said, his team consisted of The Rookie, Amon, Dutch, and Commander Bumi.

"Since when does it snow in this time of the year?" Bumi asked.

"The Sentinels must've changed the atmosphere after the Flood was released, not that it matters anymore." Buck replied as they kept moving through street after street.

Then they heard the sounds of engines in the next open area, Covenant troops and a Shadow Covenant troop vehicle. They must be mobilizing in the night for an ambush, if they knew they were the ones who were going to be surprised.

Luckily there were only two Elites and about four Grunts guarding the Shadow, meaning that the Ghost it was carrying had already left with most of the patrol. "Silencers." Buck said, they loaded their silencers.

"So this is how you equaled your world." Amon said looking at the Silenced SMG in his hands. "Impressive."

"On my markâ€¦"

"Mark!" The team came out of their hiding spots taking by surprise the small Covenant patrol, blazing the Grunts down quickly.

"Wort Wort!" The red armored Elite yelled while firing his Plasma Rifle as the other Elite concentrated his Plasma Repeater fire where The Rookie was taking cover on, behind some wrecked vehicles.

Bumi ran towards the blue armored Elite and tackled it, not expecting it the Elite fell on flat on its face. The red Elite turned to see what happened giving Buck time to unleash his SMG clip on it, making

the Elite's shield burst. Amon fired at it making the red Elite's head be penetrated by a wave of bullets.

Dutch helped Bumi by taking out his combat knife and sticking right in between the Elite's mandibles. "Thanks for the back up." Bumi said standing up and checking on his United Forces armor.

"Don't worry old man, there's no purple blood on you." Dutch said cleaning his knife on his dark ODST armor. Amon and Buck looked at the still functional Shadow.

"Maybe we can take it instead of just walking." Amon said looking at the pilot's seat. "Looks easy enough."

"This is maybe the best idea you've ever had." Buck replied while inspecting the Shadow. "All right then, Amon you take the wheel, Dutch man the turret, The Rookie, the Commander and I will support you on the back."

"On it Gunny." Dutch acknowledged jumping into the plasma turret on top of the Shadow. Amon didn't understand the strange glyphs on the vehicle's control panel but he recognized the handles in front of him.

He pressed some buttons, and the Shadow came from stand by to on, the terrorist leader smiled beneath his mask. "Giddy up Space Cowboy." Amon said as he pressed on the pedals and drove the big support vehicle through the barricade of satomobiles that blocked the street.

Ghosts appeared quickly on their tail, probably hearing the gunfire and the ramming of the cars. "Dutch, on our six!" Buck yelled. Dutch turned the heavy plasma turret towards the Ghosts, he fired and plasma shots struck the incoming Ghosts.

"Wort!" The Elite driving one of the Ghosts yelled as his energy shields flashed. Dutch kept firing but the Ghosts evaded some of the shots making it harder for the veteran ODST to keep an easy pin on them.

"Fire faster!" Bumi screamed, his voice being almost muffled by the sound of engines and plasma weapons going on.

"I'm doing the best I can!" Dutch responded, he tried to keep an eye on the incoming Ghosts but things went from bad to worse. A banshee had joined in and was blasting them from above.

"Banshee! Fast and low!" Buck informed their gunner.

"Damn!" Dutch yelled again. The banshee kept swopping in, even more elusive than the incoming Ghosts. Then the unthinkable happenedâ€¦

"Blockage!" Amon yelled, Buck turned to see what it was he was talking about. Dead ahead, there were at least three Wraiths and four golden Elites with energy swords ready waiting to slit their throats.

"No wayâ€¦" Buck said to himself, but instead of turning them into bits and pieces with their plasma mortars, the Wraiths shot at the

banshee in the air. The banshee crashed into the buildings around with the Ghosts coming into a halt, possibly knowing who had arrived.

Amon stopped the Shadow, with the strangely friendly Elites looking at them. Buck and the others hopped off the vehicle and walked in front of it, facing their unexpected saviors.

"Human, we are relieved to find you still in fighting conditions." One of the golden Elites said, his energy sword being turned off.

"Who are you with?" Buck asked, Amon , Bumi, Dutch and the Rookie were still aiming their weapons at them.

"We are with the Arbiter, stand down your weapons. We have come to help." The elite replied, Buck sighed in relief.

"Settle down guys, these guys are good." Buck said.

"Are you sure space man?" Amon asked the ODST, still not trusting the alien species.

"I'm sure, their leader is the Arbiter, he helped us end out previous conflict. Meaningâ€¦" Buck turned to speak to the elite again.

"â€¦that those Elites are rogue." Buck stated.

"Indeed human, they are vicious rebels, traitors to the Sangheili race." The elite responded. "Come, we have already made contact with your allies on the end of this city."

* * *

><p>6:32 AM Local Time

Once on the outskirts of Republic City, did the groups reunite and established an outpost to round up supplies being sent down by the friendly Elite ships.

"So meaning that the Arbiter is with the Master Chief and the Avatar in Ivanoff Station." General Iroh said, the elites had told them why they left the Arbiter and his Spec Ops squad inside the Flood infested station.

"Yes, we had to flee from the battle once the traitors and a bigger ship entered the system. We did not have enough ships to fight back, but on our way back to Halo ring that it orbited with more ships, we discovered more traitorous vessels on these coordinates." The Elite in charged told them. "That's how we discovered this world, and the humans that still inhabited it."

"Any word on the space battle?" Buck asked.

"We are pushing them back; our fleet is greater than theirs. We shall be done with the scum by mid-day." The Elite replied.

"That easies things up, the Arbiter's army can aid us in liberating the planet." Tenzin said. "We can win this."

"Good workâ€¦all of you." General Iroh said to all those present inside the meeting room, together they had effectively resisted the attacks of a technologically superior race and have come out alive.

"Amon, your help has been the most useful, and you have our gratitude." Tenzin said. Amon nodded. "And once this is all over, we can discuss new policies to ensure equality in our nation and possibly the world."

"That would be most appreciated councilman." Amon replied. Buck smirked; apparently the old sayings were true. It required a bigger threat to unite even old enemies under one banner. He stepped out of the command tent; there he was met with three teenagers.

"Let me guess, someone stole a sweetroll from one you." Buck joked.

"Did they say anything about Korra?" Mako asked, with Bolin and Asami also worried over their friend.

"They said that their leader, the Arbiter had encountered the Master Chief and your friend. They didn't how she was since they left the system once the Didact entered, but the Arbiter had already informed them. She's as of now okay." Buck informed them.

They sighed and smiled in relief, "Hold on, how the three of you evaded extraction?" Buck asked.

"Uhâ€¦we hid behind rocks?" Bolin said.

* * *

><p>Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's Orbit

"Get them off the station, now!" The Arbiter yelled, he ordered his Elites. He and the Master Chief were trapped inside a power station looking at the Composer, the defense system were still down. Meaning that the Army Troopers hadn't made it.

The Didact's ship was the last one standing and it was pulling the Composer out of its place, the Arbiter and the Chief had done all they could to prevent the Storm Covenant from getting their hands on it but it seemed that it was a diversion created by the Didact.

"Cortana, get Tillson on the line, we need those nukes." The Chief said.

"She's not responding!" Cortana responded.

"Spartan, my Elites are escorting the human scientists and your companion into the escape pods." The Arbiter informed, the Chief nodded.

"We have to get to them." The Chief said the gates came back on; they left the station and quickly sprinted towards the escape pods. Once they got there, the Elites were preparing the escape pods to take them away in case the Didact decided to use his dreaded weapon to

eradicate the Flood and any one still alive inside Ivanoff Station.

To get the pods ready and to prevent any type of power outrage, the Chief placed Cortana inside one the terminals nearby. But before they could even react, the Mantle's Approach was already facing them.

"Inside now!" The Chief yelled at them. "Arbiter, get them as far as they can!"

The Arbiter acknowledged and sealed the hatch, the escape was on its way out. Then rumbles were heard, Flood combat forms began to swarm the area around the Master Chief. He was surrounded by an army of combat forms. The Spartan took out his Assault Rifle and fired, he kept firing as fast as he could.

"Cortana, weapon systems now! Inside and out!" The Chief yelled.

"They're not responding!"

"Chiefâ€¦" Cortana said turning to the Chief, scared out of her digital mind.

The Didact charged the Composer andâ€¦an orange blast passed through the entire station. It burned through the Flood combat forms and through the Master Chief. Everyone except the Spartan was effectively digitized and turned into ashes, the Chief collapsed on the metallic floor unconscious.

His shields flickered on and off, his Mjolnir armor trying to adjust from the energy wave that hit it.

23. From The Cradle

**Ivanoff Station, Installation 03's Orbit
>

* * *

><p>Silence, that terrible silence. Nothing remained within the walls of the station; everything with a degree of sentience was burned, turned to ash and its consciousness turned into data. Cortana's holographic image sat idle on its holotank, with the Master Chief on the floor.<p>

His armor, the mighty MJOLNIR Mark VI had taken the impulse of the Composer directly and damaged some of its interior circuitry. Then the shields restarted and the Spartan began to move, he slowly but surely stood back up.

"Are you okay?" Cortana asked her companion.

"I'm fineâ€¦" He replied while he grabbed his ever reliable Assault Rifle from the cold metal floor.

"There were people hiding inside the office of the captain of this stationâ€¦I didn't knowâ€¦I didn't pay attention to their calls. I

heard themâ€¦the pulseâ€¦I could hear them screaming." Cortana said.

The Chief looked around, the corridor was full of ash from the combat forms that were about to attack him. "Those people are gone." Cortana said again.

"And more will follow if the Didact reaches Earth." The Chief responded, still focused on his mission.

"They will pair you with another AIâ€¦maybe another Cortana model if Halsey lets them." Cortana said.

"That's not going to happen." The Master Chief quickly responded, not wanting to hear any of it.

"It won't be meâ€¦you know that right?"

The Spartan turned, still not wanting to acknowledge the fact that his partner was dyingâ€¦from the inside out. "Bringing out a broadsword in Hangar C-11, whatever the Librarian did to you obviously worked." Cortana stated as she brought out a broadsword space fighter.

"Cortanaâ€¦it's not over, not yet."

"Not yet." Cortana began to glow a little brighter; hope was still alive in her despite the circumstances.

* * *

><p>Troop Bay, Shadow of Intent

Korra's eyes opened and where met with a purple ceiling and the sound of beeping machinery next to her. She sat and rubbed her head, she looked around the room she was inâ€¦it looked alien. "Oh noâ€¦" She realized, she was inside one of the Covenant's ship.

Korra quickly jumped off the bed and went for the door, it automatically opened but then a towering figure blocked her way. "Ah!" Korra shouted at the sudden appearance of the alien, she quickly jumped back and firebender a ball of fire at it.

The fireball struck the alien, but it stood its ground and tanked it with its energy shields barely feeling the strike. "Stop human pup." The alien said, grabbing Korra by her right wrist and lifting her to eye levelâ€¦its eye level.

"Let me go!" Korra yelled.

"I am the Arbiter, we are allies." The alien said. "You are safe here."

He released Korra from his iron grip; she rubbed her wrist and looked up at the Arbiter. "I don't know if I should trust you." Doubt was still in the Avatar's mind, last time she had seen an Elite it tried to kill her with a glowing sword.

"Is this proof enough, come in." The Arbiter called, then Korra's friends; Mako, Bolin and Asami entered the room with joy in their

faces.

"Korra!" They said together and quickly hugged the surprised Avatar.

"Hahaha!" She laughed as her friends kept hugging her. "But how?"

"A lot of things happened but these guys swooped in and kicked those rebel aliens out!" Bolin responded, as eager as ever.

"Basically what Bolin said, but you should've seen what happenedâ€¦it was intense." Asami added.

"I'm happy that you're alright." Mako said making Korra blush a little.

"Where's the Chief?" Asami asked.

"I don't knowâ€¦" Korra replied, then she looked at the Arbiter. "Where is he?"

"We evacuated the station as soon as the parasite began to get near us, the Spartan stayed behind as the enemy ship fired." The Arbiter responded.

"Is he dead?" Mako asked.

"Were it so easy." The Arbiter said, not believing that the Master Chief to be dead, he has survived worse.

"Where are we heading?" Korra asked.

"The system known as Sol, the human homeworld."

Korra couldn't believe she was going to the planet where everything had come from, the world where her ancestors erected one of the greatest interstellar empires of all time. They accompanied the Arbiter to the ship's bridge; there a group of ODSTs were looking at the monitors.

"So that's the little lady." Romeo said, being the first of them to notice them entering the bridge.

Buck punched him on the shoulder and then walked to the Arbiter. "Your officers say that we are close."

"Indeed, the fleet will enter the system with the might of all of Sanghelios." The Arbiter replied. "We already hailed your planet's defenses, they are waiting for us."

"Great, my name is Gunnery Sergeant Edward Buck of the United Nations Space Command good to meet you Avatar." Buck shook Korra's hand.

"Uhâ€¦good to meet you too." Korra said.

"Arbiter, we are entering the system." A red-armored Elite informed.

"Prepare to exit from slipspace." The Arbiter ordered and sat on the

officer's chair. Korra felt excited to see the cradle world, maybe she could find some answers about wellâ€¦everything.

* * *

><p>The Solar System

The Shadow of Intent exited slipspace and was met with an already heated battle between the UNSC Home Fleet and the Storm Covenant Fleet accompanying the Mantle's Approach.

"Evasive action!" Arbiter yelled, the entire Fleet of Retribution led by the Shadow of Intent moved through the intense naval battle, aiding the UNSC ships in any way they could. Then a gigantic ship smashed several enemy CCS-class battlecruisers like they were nothing, it was the Infinity it had entered the battle!

"This is Captain Lasky of the Infinity, we have joined in!"

"That's the commander!" Asami yelled.

As soon as the Shadow of Intent retreated behind the Home Fleet line to release the support vessels, Seraphs, it was when Korra saw her. It was beautiful; the majesty of it was beyond words. The Avatar has finally been reunited with the cradle world, with Planet Earth.

"Wowâ€¦" Mako said as he joined Korra. "Is thatâ€¦is that what I think it is?"

"It's the cradle worldâ€¦" Korra replied as memories of ancient Avatars flooded her mind, knowledge long lost finally resurfaced as she gazed upon the blue planet.

"We have a confirmation Arbiter, the Spartan is inside a human spaceship within the flagship's hull!" One of the Elite officers reported, getting everyone's attention.

"Tell the fleet to support the humans in every way they can, navigation, join the Infinity!" Arbiter ordered.

"Yes sir!"

The Shadow of Intent then moved, going through behind the Super MAC Cannons and into the fray once more, linking up with the UNSC Infinity. The Mantle's Approach tanked the massive strikes of the MAC Cannons; the rounds of super-fast uranium did nothing to the highly-durable outer layer of the Didact's flagship.

"I have to get in there!" Korra said.

"In where?" Mako asked, holding on to a nearby column as the ship shook from the plasma blasts hitting its energy shields.

"Inside the Didact's ship!"

"That's suicide gal!" Dutch responded.

"If I don't get inside, there will be no way that the Chief will be able to beat the Ancient!" Korra replied. "It's my duty to beat

him!"

The Arbiter heard Korra, he turned. "The Ancient? Speak human, who commands that Forerunner vessel?"

"He's the Didactâ€¦the Ancient God of War!" Mako responded. The Elites then began to yell, they were fighting one of their gods. A living godâ€¦the Arbiter didn't know what to do, is he capable of going against the very foundations of his religion? Should he allow the Covenant God of War known as the Didact to eradicate humanity?

As far as he knew it, the fate of an entire race rested on his shouldersâ€¦again. The Arbiter then made a decision. "Brothers, even though we now know that there is god inside that vessel it is our duty to our allies to aid them! We have never gone back to our word, even in the darkest of days, we will let him and his traitorous allies feel the might of the Light of Sanghelios!"

The Elites well silent for a couple of seconds until they cheered in favor of the Atbiter, they were more loyal to him than to their beliefs. "Take seat Avatar, we will deliver you to that ship."

The Infinity then used its advance Forerunner weaponry on the Mantle's Approach, firing directly into the ship. The Composer was delayed for the moment it seemed, and the Master Chief was allowed entrance into the Forerunner vessel.

"Communications from the human ship!"

"Patch it through." The Arbiter ordered. Then the face of Commander Lasky came to view.

"Arbiter, fancy seeing you here." Lasky said with a smirk on his face.

"Commander!" Korra shouted, happy of seeing another friendly face.

"Hey you're okay! Its Captain Lasky now, naval command didn't take too kindly of Del Rio leaving the Master Chief and a small battalion of ODSTs behind." Lasky replied.

"You bet." Dutch commented.

"Captain, any word on what the hell is going on?" Buck asked.

"As you can probably see Sarge is that we are kicking major ass, with the Arbiter's fleet here we have destroyed the majority of the Covenant Storm's ships except for that monstrosity you see in front of us." Lasky responded. "We made a hole for the Master Chief to deliver hell to the Didact personally."

"I have to get inside, Captain." Korra stated wanting to get her hands on the Didact for what he did to herâ€¦well other world.

"Well that's not a very good idea, thing is as strong as a planet and we only had enough energy for one blast. I doubt that the Shiva warheads will even make a dent on that thing." Lasky said. "And besides that's suicide, you are not even prepared to face what's

inside that vessel let alone its commander."

"I amâ€¦just get me inside. The Chief won't last long once he faces the Didact!"

Lasky then began to thing, "It's virtually impossible to even get near that thingâ€¦" Lasky said, and he was right. The Mantle's Approach was the most powerful ship of the Forerunner Navy back on its day, and it's probably the most powerful ship now. A ship built for war, and everybody knows how deadly the Forerunners were when it came to war.

"At least for nowâ€¦the Chief is keeping him busy." Bolin said as they all watch the idle Forerunner ship floating on Earth's orbit.

"Yeahâ€¦but for how long?" Korra asked, she knew that the battle ended today butâ€¦who would win it? An ancient war general that has lived for millions of years or a young and inexperienced Avatar?

24. To The Grave

The Mantle's Approach

* * *

><p>The Master Chief slowly moved through the complex and enormous hallways of the Didact's ship, he had barely entered into the vessel. On his back he carried a nuclear warhead, this was Humanity's gift to the Didact and the Chief would deliver it personally.<p>

For this endeavor, the Spartan had swapped his Assault Rifle for a Battle Rifle and a SAW, a full-auto machine gun; he would need them inside the belly of the beast. The Spartan super-soldier followed Cortana's NAV points to make his way inside the various insides of the ship.

"**You have not been composed. Such inoculation should not have been possible.**" The Didact's voice thundered through the halls.

"Where is that coming from?" The Chief asked.

"Hold on." Cortana replied.

"**Where reason does not stop you, perhaps force can at least delay you.**" The Forerunner said again, this time making several Prometheans teleport around the Master Chief.

The Chief fired at the incoming Crawlers, taking them down with his Battle Rifle. But they were a distraction; the Spartan was struck in the back by a Knight. The shields flickered and the Master Chief regained his composure. He took out his SAW and fired with all of its might, and with enough bullets the Knight fell.

The Master Chief quickly sprinted towards the next area; it was only a matter of time before the Didact would be able to lock him away from the Composer.

* * *

><p>Shadow of Intent Hangar

Korra was sitting on top of a Sangheili cargo crates, looking at her wrist armor, Captain Lasky insisted if she was going inside the Didact's ship she might as well be armored up. The Captain had come into the Sangheili assault carrier via a Pelican, he was being accompanied by Commander Sarah Palmer, and the two of them seemed to be like bread and butter.

"Like this one? It's an ODST battle dress uniform, better and stronger than the Marine BDU that you and your friends used on Requiem." Lasky said.

"It certainly fits better." Korra replied as she knocked at her wrist armor, it was certainly metallic in nature but it was as weightless as a feather.

"I still don't agree of sending a kid to do a man's job." Palmer stated. She and Korra had a sort of rocky relationship ever since their first meeting in the Infinity.

"I know how to handle myself." Korra responded, getting a smirk from Palmer, the older woman liked to bother the younger Avatar.

"Ready?" Buck said coming from the Pelican, he had restocked and was ready for battle.

"Hold on, I'm going alone." Korra said.

"I'm afraid that I ordered the Sarge and his squad to be with you at all timesâ€¦I don't want you dead, you're far too important to die." Lasky said as he handed her his personal Magnum sidearm. "You die and your people fall apartâ€¦here this bad boy will has been with me since my days at the Academy, I'm sure it won't disappoint."

Korra smiled, the amount of faith these, technically, strangers was fantastical. They had only met for three days and for others even less, but they were putting all of their chips on her and it felt good. "I won't let you guys down."

Before she entered the Phantom, Korra was met with her friends. They were going to stay inside the Shadow of Intent and were going to be transferred to the Infinity.

"Good luck Korra, kick his old butt." Bolin told her.

"Give him all you got." Asami added and last was Mako who wanted to go with her but knew that she was going to be safe.

"Take care." It was all he said; Mako wasn't that great with words. But that was what Korra was for; in a burst of emotion Korra grabbed him by the collar of his jacket and kissed him passionately.

"Whoa okay, thought I would only see this in movies." Romeo said.

"Looks like you're not the best Romeo after all huh?" Mickey commented.

"Shut up." Romeo replied.

"All right, all right cut it out kids." Dutch said, Mako blushed as Bolin and Asami giggled at his surprised face. Korra followed the grizzled ODSTs into the Phantom, this was a suicide mission but it was for the greater good of Mankind and after allâ€¦Korra is the Avatar of humanity.

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><p>The Mantle's Approach

This was it, the center of it allâ€¦the Composer. Before Master Chief entered the gate that led towards the core, he replaced his used up weapons with Forerunner weaponry, Lightrifles and Suppressors.

"We are at the Composerâ€¦you know we only have one shot at this right?" Cortana asked her Spartan companion.

"We'll make it work." The Chief replied while stepping into the gates and beheld the immenseness of the core.

"**And soâ€¦you come at last.**" The Didact said, he was floating within the loading rays of the Composer looking as omnipotent as ever.

The Master Chief stepped into the man cannon that allowed him to enter the inner core, where the Composer was. "The Didact and the Composer are protected by some kind of light shield." Cortana reported.

"How do we bring it down?"

"Put me inside a terminal." The Master Chief looked for a terminal; there was one in the middle of the platform he was standing on.

"I'm about to do something you are not going to like." Cortana said, she began to rip herself apart, ripping the rampant personalities apart. The Chief took out the chip and placed it back in his head.

"What did you just do?"

"I split myâ€¦rampant personalities into the coreâ€¦this will hopefully overload the shields." Cortana responded, it sounded like the act took a lot of her energy. "We do it enough times and it will fall."

The Master Chief then went on to the next platform, jumping into it via man cannons. "**Ah, my finest opponent is arriving. This shall be interesting; the way will be opened for her coming.**" The Didact said, this caught Cortana's attention.

"There is a Phantom dropship coming inâ€¦and it has humans in it!" Cortana said. The Master Chief couldn't understand who would be crazy enough to venture into the lair of the Didactâ€¦well aside from himself.

* * *

><p>Phantom

"We are in proximities of the ship." Mickey reported, he was piloting the Phantom. "Get ready."

Korra breathed deeply, she looked at her reflection on the ODST helmet she held on her hands. This was it, there was no going back now, she put on the helmet and it sealed completely. Surprisingly, the Didact's ship then began to open up, its external hull opened revealing the core of the Composer.

"There!" Buck yelled, noticing the gigantic gun pointing right at Earth. The Phantom swoop in closer, but the Didact wanted no interference he only wanted his rival. Light turrets fired at the Phantom as it got near to a nearby platform, it opened its sides to let the ODSTs out but one of the turrets got the Phantom.

The dropship shook from the punch; Korra couldn't hold tightly to her seat and fell off the Phantom. Being pressured by the turrets, Mickey had to fall back, barely getting out alive. Korra was not alone.

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><p>The Mantle's Approach

Korra was now alone, she breathed quickly as she saw the Earth on the sky. As if it was watching her, wanting her to win. Korra looked at the HUD of her helmet; it noticed her of the oxygen levels of the armorâ€¦89% left. She had to move now.

The Master Chief moved in to the final terminal, there had been heavy Promethean resistance. "**You humans sought the Didact, you shall have him.**" The Didact said, the energies of the Composer almost loading completely. The Spartan ripped through the Crawlers, getting towards the tower with the terminal as quickly as he humanly could.

With his reflexes he was able to rip the light sword from one of the Promethean Knights and beheading it with it. Then he threw it at another, killing it and making it drop its Incineration Cannon. The Chief grabbed it and shot at the incoming wave of Crawlers, annihilating every one of them. He sprinted towards the terminal and placed Cortana in it.

She once more split her remaining personalities to overload the shields of the Didact. And so it did, the shields were brought down. But it was too lateâ€¦

"**And yet, still you failâ€¦**" With a wave of his hand, the mighty Didact fired the Composer. A ray of light blasted from face and delivered death from the heavens on Earth. Korra saw the ray hitting the beautiful blue planet above, hitting it so hard that she could see the area of impact being covered completely by the wave.

"No!" Korra screamed.

Being caught off-guard, Chief and Cortana also saw the attack, but the Didact acted offensively this time. With his power he destroyed the terminal Cortana was stored in with a explosion big enough to

knock the Master Chief away.

"Cortana!" The Chief yelled, his armor being damaged by the blast. His shields recharged, only anger could be found below the golden visor. There was only more objective, deliver the bomb and blow this ship to kingdom come.

The Spartan ran towards the initial platform, there was a lift ready for him. Curiously, it was vibrating at different intervals than the other objects like the man cannons and the other light bridges. None the less he took it and set foot on the light bridge that led to the core of the Composer where the Didact was in.

He slowly walked towards it, holding to his Lightrifle tightly. "**You persist too long after your own defeat.**" The voice of the Didact said, the Chief aimed his weapon to all his sides but he couldn't find the Forerunner.

The Spartan proceeded towards the core, "**Come then warrior, have your resolution.**" The Chief heard the Didact right behind him.

He turned to fire but was met with an invisible punch, striking him away with great force and knocking the warhead away. The Chief noticed, he looked at the towering Didact walking closer to him. He made a break for it, the Master Chief ran towards the warhead but was stopped by the invisible force that the Didact seemed to control.

"**So misguidedâ€¦Humanity's imprisonment is a kindness.**" The Didact said as he brought the Chief close to him and began to crush him with his force.

"No!" A voice was heard, and then a lightning bolt struck the Didact, making him drop the Chief on the light bridge. The Spartan could barely moveâ€¦

"You are not going to win!" Korra yelled, she was standing opposite to the Didact whose helmet collapsed to his armor revealing his bestial face.

"**At last here we are, back to square one.**" The Didact said. "**Our war will be finally over.**"

"I won't let you do this to my people!" Korra said, tapping into the Avatar State one more time. "_You will pay for your crimes!_" The voice of hundredsâ€¦thousands of past lives came out of Korra's mouth as she was surrounded by a golden aura.

"**I have long dreamt of this day, Reclaimer.**" The Didact responded, bringing his helmet back up. He went in for the attack, trying to use his force to crush Korra. But it seemed that it wasn't working, the Avatar quickly moved using her enhanced bending to rip out several Forerunner metals off the walls of the ship and threw them at the Didact.

The mighty Forerunner warrior-servant avoided the incoming projectiles; he created a Lightrifle out of his hands and shot at Korra. She blocked it with one of the tiles of the ship, and then threw at the Didact. It struck, giving the enhanced Avatar an opening.

There was no oxygen on the area they were in, so firebending, airbending and waterbending were out of the question. There was only one thing to doâ€¦she ran towards the bigger Forerunner, and began to climbing on his taller body.

The Didact tried to grab her but she began to use her enhanced metalbending to rip the Didact's helmet off his head. "**Grah!**" The Didact grunted furiously, he could've killed her in an instant but his arrogance had gotten the best of him. The Avatar then placed her hand on the Didact's head and began to energy-bend, her past lives doing the work.

The Chief regained his composure; he looked at the armored Korra grabbing on the Didact's head. He tried to stand up, but the Didact's grip had wounded him gravely.

The Didact's eyes began to glow like Korra'sâ€¦and thenâ€¦The Didact grabbed Korra and threw her away. She landed on her back.

"**Filthy dog! You dare to invade my mind, like as ifâ€¦**" Then something stopped the mighty Didact in his tracks. Korra and the Chief looked at the shocked Forerunner; there was a strange fear on his eyes.

Tentacles then ripped from the outer core of the Composer, and a twisted, evil laugh ringed through the inner core. "_**HAHAHAHAHHAHAHAHA!**_"

The whole ship shook at the laugher, "_**Did you think me defeated?!**_" The gargling sound of the Parasite ripped through the ears of the Didact.

"**NO! How could it be here, how!?**" The Didact screamed, and then several Elite Combat Forms began to jump out of the holes left by the tentacles.

"Oh noâ€¦" Korra said as she went to attend the still weak Master Chief.

"_**Didact, do you have a moment? Just a moment. That's all it will take. HAHAHAHA!**_"

25. Dust And Echoes

The Didact sat by his lonesome inside his private quarters, he was deep thought. The war with humanity was over but something loomed on the horizon, he felt it. The might of the Forerunner Encume reached across the stars, inhabiting more than millions of worlds, bringing life and civilization to other lesser races.

But the Didact knew that every great empire had its end, and theirs was just over the horizon, that terrible and horrible horizon. They had found out that the humans were not expanding; they were runningâ€¦but running from what? What could bring such a powerful empire, an empire so mighty run as a small child?

The lord of the Prometheans stood up from his seat and began looking at the star-chart; he began to look at all the habitable worlds, from

Erde-Tyrane to the Capital. He smiled as he remembered his wife, the Librarian, her compassion and brilliance were the only things that could halt his militaristic fury. She was probably with the humans, caring for themâ€¦making them her children, after her real ones perished in the war.

Such thoughts escaped from the Didact's mind when he heard something knocking at his quarter's gates, the guard's should've dealt with any intrusions. "_Who wishes to speak with the Didact?_" He asked, but he got no answer. The Didact went for the gate and opened it, instead of seeing the halls of his home out of home he was met with darkness, the pure visage of oblivion.

"_**The rebel child.**_" A grotesque voice ripped through the air, the Didact looked around while his quarters began to be corrupted from the inside out.

"_Reveal yourself evil one!_" The Didact yelled. The mighty Forerunner was then grabbed by an unseen power, freezing him in place, his armor failing him. "_What are you?_"

"_**I? I am a monument to all your sins.**_" The beast replied while it showed it grotesque face, it had multiple eyes, millions of tendrils and one immense maw. "_**And your era is over.**_"

The Didact closed his eyes as the creature threw him into its opened maw and he fell into darkness.

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><p>The Mantle's Approach

Fear clouded the Didact's mind as hundreds of combat forms flooded the outer core of his ship, he summoned his Promethean Knights to quell the parasite but there were too many of them.

Korra tried to aid the wounded Master Chief who tried with all his might to grab the nuclear warhead but it was too far from his reach. Korra saw it, she quickly ran towards it but was stopped by the Didact.

"**No! This is not the end, my duty will be fulfilled!**" The Didact yelled, crushing Korra with his grip. The Avatar entered the Avatar State, releasing herself from the Foreruner's grip.

"_You brought this sentence to yourself._" The Avatar stated, using her immense power to bend the Didact's armor and throwing him onto the other side of the light bridge.

The Flood kept coming, easily ripping through the Promethean lines and entering into the inner core. Korra exited the Avatar State and quickly made a run to the nuke, grabbing it and bringing it to the Master Chief.

The Didact was being attacked by hundreds of infection forms and combat forms, he moved his arms trying to get the infection forms away from him while breaking combat forms apart. But then a tentacle appeared behind him.

"**You shall not take me alive once more!**" The Didact screamed

while being caught by the tentacle, with his power he broke the tentacle but was then smacked by another one. The mighty Didact fell into the singularity below, the slipspace hole that powered the Composer.

"**NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!**" The Didact screamed before he was consumed by the slipspace portal.

Korra then saw the combat forms nearing them, killing the remaining Prometheans. "Chief!" Korra said. The Master Chief readied the warhead; he looked at Korra then at Earth. This was itâ€¦

The Master Chief, with his last remaining strength, activated the nuclear device and everything went pitch black.

* * *

><p>Unknown Locationâ€¦_

The Master Chief opened his eyes, something happened as soon as he activated the nuke. He was inside a bubble, some kind of light bubble. Next to him was an unconscious Korra, she was still alive. He checked her armor's air counter while scanning her with his visor; it was still steady at a 64% of oxygen.

He stood up and looked at his surroundings, "Cortana?" It was the first thing he asked. Then a blue glow began to appear behind him, he turned and there was Cortana but she was in the size of a normal human.

"How?" The Spartan asked, clearly taken by surprised by this.

"Oh I'm the strangest thing you've seen all day?" Cortana responded. The Master Chief falling back into his militaristic mindset wanted to believe that Cortana was fine.

"So how do we get out of here?" He asked her. Cortana smiled, she knew that this was going to be hard for him.

"I'm not coming with you this time."

"What!?" The Chief couldn't believe what he was hearing; there was no way he was going to leave her.

"Most of me is down there. I only held enough back to get you off the ship." Cortana replied looking at the space below them.

"No, we go together." The Chief responded, hesitant on hearing her words.

"Johnâ€¦" Cortana said as she touched his chest armor, her fingers glowed while she touched the armor. "â€¦I've waited so long to do that."

"It was my job to take care of you." The Chief said, his deep voice cracking a little bit.

"We were supposed to take care of each other. And we did." Cortana said, she began to walk away from the Chief.

"Wait." The Master Chief said while extending his arm, not wanting to let her go.

"Welcome homeâ€¦John." The Master Chief's companion said while she began to dim and finally disappear away. The light bubble surrounding the Master Chief and Korra began to collapse. The pieces of the Mantle's Approach surrounding them.

* * *

><p>Earth's Orbit

A pelican flew from the Infinity and into the debris field that once was the indestructible Forerunner ship that threatened Earth and all of its inhabitants. There, within the debris field was the Master Chief floating in space while holding Korra.

The pelican found them and lightened its search lights on them, "Infinity Actual? Pelican Nine Sixer. We found them."

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity

The pelican opened, the hangar was full of marines and Spartan-IVs ready to salute. The Master Chief stepped out, all of the soldiers then saluted the older Spartan-II. Following him out of the pelican was Korra, she looked for her friends.

They were waiting for her with opened arms, the Avatar smiled.

Some hours later, the Master Chief had avoided contact with others and isolated himself from the rest of the Infinity. He was looking at Earth from one of the windows; he didn't say anything he just looked on to the planet.

Lasky walked and stood next to him, "Mind if I join you?" He asked.

"Of course not, Sir." The Chief replied.

"At ease, Chief. Feels kind of odd of you calling me Sir." Lasky said, they both looked at Earth. Trying to break the silence Lasky wanted to break the ice. "Beautiful, isn't she? I don't get to see her often enough. I grew up on New Harmony. Attended Corbulo Military Academy. Never saw Earth in person until I was an adult, but... I still think of her as home."

The Chief didn't respond, he was still stoic. "You don't talk much, do you?" Still the Spartan didn't respond. "Chief, I won't pretend to know how you feel. I've lost people I care about, but... never anything like you're going through."

"Our duty, as soldiers, is to protect humanity. Whatever the cost." The Chief responded.

"You say that like soldiers and humanity are two different things. Soldiers aren't machines. We're just people." Lasky said. The Master Chief noticed something in his words, he turned to look at him then he turns to look back at Earth. "I'll let you have the deck to

yourself."

Lasky began to walk away, the Chief then sighed. "She said that to me onceâ€¦about being a machine." He remembered Cortana's wordsâ€¦alone.

Korra was in the mess hall with her friends, Mako, Bolin and Asami. Accompanying them was the ODST Squad with Buck and the others. Sarah Palmer and some her S-IVs were celebrating their victory as well. Lasky then joined them, the soldiers saluted the officer on deck and he told them to take ease.

It was quite a celebration, but Korra was not feeling the same. In her mind, there was empty hole telling her that this was not the worst to come. That horrible, twisted voice that haunted her was still pulling her very being,spiritually, ever since she entered the Avatar State for the first time.

She didn't tell anyone, they all looked so happy celebratingâ€¦and she didn't want to ruin it. "You okay?" Mako asked her.

"Yeahâ€¦I'm fine." Korra replied giving him a warm smile.

"Then come on, Commander Palmer wants you to dance with the Captain." Mako said, Korra knew that this was just the beginning but she let herself go and enjoy this while it lasted.

**The End**

26. Epilogue

"**In this hour of victory, we taste only defeat. I ask why?"**

Two pelicans flew into the affected city of New Phoenix, it landed.

"**We are Forerunners, guardians of all that exists. The roots of the galaxy have grown deep under our careful tending. Where there is life, the wisdom of our countless generations has saturated the soil."**

Several troopers jump out of the pelican with a number of medics, one of the medics examines a pile of ash on the ground with his tool. One of the troopers looks at the plazaâ€¦everyone in the city was gone.

"**Our strength is a luminous sun towards which all intelligence blossoms. And the impervious shelter beneath which it has prospered.**"

The Master Chief walks alone inside one of the hallways of the UNSC Infinity, still mourning the loss of his companion, his other half.

"**I stand before you. Accused of the sin of ensuring Forerunner ascendancy. Of attempting to save us from this fate where we are forced to... recede...**"

The Chief enters the Spartan-IV armory, many personnel and Spartans

trained and armored up or de-armored inside.

"**Humanity stands as the greatest threat in the galaxy**"

There Korra and her friends were talking with Commander Palmer and the other Spartan IVs, they seemed to be waiting to be taken back to Requiem and were passing the time there.

"**Refusing to eradicate them is a fool's gambit**."

Korra and the others notice the arriving Master Chief, his towering figure walking pass them. The Spartan IVs are taken aback by the presence of such powerful figure joining them.

"**We squander eons in the darkness, while they seize our triumphs for their own.**"

Korra walks forward to approach the Chief, but he walks pass her.

"**The Mantle of Responsibility, for all things, belongs to Forerunners alone!**"

The Master Chief enters into one of the de-armoring machines, prepared to take off his MJOLNIR VI armor for the first time in years. The techs around him prepare the machine for it and connect several wires into the back of his armor.

"**Think of my acts as you will**"

The armor begins to loosen, his chest armor falling and hitting the floor with a loud thud.

"**But do not doubt the reality.**"

His arm armor also falls off.

"**The reclamation... has already begun**"

The bolts of his helmet open and pressured air escapes from it.

"**And we are hopeless to stop it.**"

The helmet is taken off, and for the first time in so many years, John-117 is a ghost in a shell no more.

End file.